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THE AMERICAN  
JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Founded by G. STANLEY HALL in 1887.

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VOL. VII.

APRIL, 1896.

No. 3.

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A STUDY IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS  
PHENOMENA.

BY JAMES H. LEUBA,

Fellow in Psychology, Clark University.

INTRODUCTION.

The passage from the standpoint of knowledge for knowledge's sake, to that of knowledge for life's sake, expresses one of the aspects of the widest movement of modern intellectual evolution. Our age, and in particular the Anglo-Saxon race, has gained the reputation of being intensely practical. This tendency has a deeper philosophical meaning than is generally recognized. As the child passes with advancing years from actions having no objective end to activities for definite results, in a like manner do nations turn from the delusive grandeur of the knowledge for knowledge's sake ideal to that of knowledge for life's sake, and substitute the Gospel of Being and of Doing for that of Knowing.

Intellectual pursuits have been powerfully stimulated and their direction much altered by this great life-wave. Until the beginning of our century the formal operations of the mind and the framing of cosmological schemes were the chief objects of philosophical meditation. Schopenhauer, following in the steps of some predecessors, and reacting against what we like to call static philosophy, brought us face to face with the unconscious, the emotional, the striving forces of nature. Up to him philosophy was anatomical; he made it physiological.

It is in psychology that we find this "practical"

tendency working the most decisive changes. With the increased interest in the impulsive, the instinctive, the affective side of life in general, a number of new lines of research, all having a close relation to life, have been opened: Child study, the psychology of growth, of adolescence, of sex; some branches of anthropology, psychiatry. And instead of standing aloof from life on barren heights, modern psychology feeds on biology and on physiology, and is the handmaid of pedagogy and of ethics.

There remains a domain in which psychological science has not yet planted its standard: it has ignored the manifestations of religious life. Yet there are few questions engrossing so much the attention of our thinking world as that of religion, and there are no spheres in which more powerful creative forces are at work.<sup>1</sup> The fall of Christian orthodoxy is accompanied with a recrudescence of religious fervor. Neo-Christian movements are in progress in France<sup>2</sup> and in Germany, and have long since begun to agitate England and the United States. All over the civilized world men's hearts and brains are in travail with a new Revelation.

It is true that a great deal of historical and philosophical work bearing on the religious problem has been done during the past decades, but no researches, from the standpoint of modern psychology, on the subjective phenomena of religious life have appeared. Comparative studies of religions, historical accounts of their growth and development, investigations into the contents of the religious consciousness, are valuable contributions to our knowledge. They accomplish for religion what would have been done for medicine, before dissection was practiced, by historical researches, comparative expositions of the various notions and systems in vogue in different countries, and the like; all of which is very good and useful; but the essential work, the scientific work *par excellence*, that was to give to medicine a solid foundation, was the actual study of the body by means of scalpel and microscope.

If religion has any reality, it must perforce express itself in psychic and physiological phenomena. The work of a true Science of Religion, as we understand it, is to find out what these subjective manifestations are, and then to treat them as it would any other psychic fact. Neither the theories, nor the external practices, rites or ceremonies, but the deeper

<sup>1</sup> Consider the amount of life poured into the veins of humanity by such men as Gautama, Jesus, St. Augustine, St. Francis of Assisi, Luther, Wesley, Booth, and others.

<sup>2</sup> For an account of the Neo-Christian Movement in France, see the AM. JOUR. PSYCH., Vol. V, pp. 496 ff.

subjective realities experienced by the individual, constitute the material out of which the New Revelation will issue. Never mind the old and the new popular beliefs concerning these realities, never mind the body of doctrines held by the subject of these experiences; *mind the subjective fact in itself.* To it science must apply its tools, for it is the essence of religious life. After all, the questions which must be solved are the following: *What are the gifts in the hands of Religion, and how can man become partaker of them? How and by what in religion is life transformed and ennobled? How is man "born again"?* These are the questions confronting Science and Philanthropy alike.

We would not convey the impression that we hold in contempt the labors of the eminent workers in the field of the history and philosophy of Religion. We would only direct the attention of those interested in this problem to another line of research, and emphasize our conviction—which, we cannot help thinking, will be shared by all those who have learned the lesson given us by the history of the Natural Sciences,—that its solution will come only from the scientific psychological study of every one of the particular subjective manifestations of religious life.

Supposing that these several phenomena have been singled out, and that, as far as our means permit, they have been determined in their cause and in their nature, we should possess in these theoretical results the elements of a science of religion. The new creed would be born; the wings of youth would no more be clipped in the spring of life by a scholastic dogmatism; and the soul-midwifery now extensively, but ignorantly, practiced by our revivalists and pastors, could be based upon a positive knowledge of the psychology of regeneration. "What a fantastic dream!" many will exclaim. It must be admitted that the difficulties in the way of such a task are serious, and that we are as yet far distant from the goal; nevertheless, that it is no Utopia, but the sure conquest of a near future, is warranted by the recent advances of psychology; for, wherein do religious phenomena essentially differ from some of those with which that science is now dealing? The religious experiences named *sense of sin, repentance, remorse, aspirations toward holiness, regeneration (conversion), trust, faith*, belong to the same class as the affective problems now under study, as, for instance, the question of pain and pleasure, the relation of the feelings to the intellect, the motor power of ideas, attention, effort, etc. If they do not include the whole of religious life, the facts we have mentioned constitute at least the essence of Christian life; for what reason should we pry into the latter

and refrain from inquiring into the former? The subjective facts of religious life belong to psychology. It is the duty and the privilege of that science to extend its beneficial sceptre over this realm also. The time is particularly favorable for such an annexation; the power that ruled during the past centuries has grown senile, its authority is denied; a painful anarchy prevails. Let psychology accept the succession that falls to it by right.

Led by considerations, some of which are indicated in the preceding pages, while others are to be mentioned in the following section, we have undertaken a study of the phenomenon commonly called "Conversion." We have chosen conversion because of its striking and well delineated characteristics, and on account of its paramount importance in religious life. Moreover, material for the study could be collected without too much difficulty. The reader may feel that our choice has been presumptuous. However that may be, it is with a painful feeling of its incompleteness and insufficiency that we send forth the following essay. Had it no other value, it would at least be an indication of what might be done in this department of psychology.

As a number of records of conversions has been appended, we shall dispense with a description of the experience going under that name.

We have limited our material to sudden and well marked cases, for the reason that violent psychic phenomena, by their very emphasis, bring to light what remains obscure in less intense and slower events. In the main the conclusions reached by the study of sudden conversions apply with equal exactitude to slowly progressing regenerations.

#### THE RELIGIOUS MOTIVE.

We are aware that many will be of the opinion that the subject of our inquiry is an abnormal phenomenon, which would not occur in a healthy and enlightened community; they will see in it mere idiosyncrasies extraneous to the main current of life. That such an estimate ignores the true nature of conversion will be made apparent, we hope, by the following rapid glance at the evolution of religious consciousness.

Religious philosophers have experienced perplexing difficulties when they have attempted to extract from the various known forms of religion, common characteristics which could serve in the making of a definition of Religion. Herbert Spencer finds the vital element of Religion in the impulse of the human race to seek for first principles:—

Religions diametrically opposed in their overt dogmas, are yet perfectly at one in the tacit conviction that the existence of the world with all it contains and all which surrounds it, is a mystery ever pressing for interpretation. On this point, if on no other, there is entire unanimity. . . . . That this is the vital element in all religions is further proved by the fact that it is the element which not only survives every change, but grows more distinct the more highly the religion is developed.

No definition considering religion as a noetic impulse and making it dependent upon particular conceptions, as that of God, of soul, of spirit, of immortality, can possibly be adequate. *The essence of religion is a striving towards being, not towards knowing.* If Spencer, and the many philosophers who think with him, were right, religion, purified of superstitions, would be neither more nor less than philosophy and science, and the natural culmination of the various forms of religion could only be, as Auguste Comte affirmed, Positive Philosophy, following upon Metaphysics, itself the child of Religion.

That which the term Religion embraced in early societies was a complex product, made up of all the fundamental needs and aspirations of men. It was an embryo containing potentially several different parts and functions as yet undifferentiated, and consequently going under a common name. Thinkers of the opinion quoted above have followed the development of one limb—of the head, if you please—and ignore whatever else grew out of the embryo. The noetic impulse was one of the elements contained in the primitive conglomerate, to be sure; but not the only one, perhaps not even the chief one. Auguste Comte's three stages correspond truly to three links in the chain of evolution, but he failed to see that at every link other links branched off. Positive philosophy is the form assumed *in our time* by one of the germinating elements contained in the primitive plasma known originally as Religion; the thirst for knowledge. But something else issued forth from primitive Religion—a something essentially different from a propensity to solve the riddle of the universe. It is this other shoot which is to-day the vital force of that which has inherited the name of religion. In the remainder of this chapter we shall try to point out the nature of that motive power. It is not yet completely differentiated from the philosophical motive; they are still blended together in practice and in theory. However, theologies and philosophies are being rapidly winnowed out by the blind intelligence of growth, and religion will soon have assumed an independent and definite figure clearly separated from the latter.

The religion of the savage, roughly described, includes

beliefs in spirits, good and bad, endowed with the power of harming and prospering. It finds expression in emotions of fear and of hope, of anger and of good will; in rites and ceremonies destined to please the spirits, with the expectation of direct returns, or prompted only by a desire for fellowship. Let beliefs in spirits cease, and this form of religion is at an end. When the relation between man and the Powers above assume a higher aspect, we rise to the Jewish and Christian religions, for instance. Fear, which plays such a preponderant rôle in primitive religions, as also in the childhood of the individual, is replaced by love. God is now pictured as a sympathetic Father, listening and answering, never angered against His truly repentant children. He stands at the door of the paternal mansion with outstretched arms to receive the prodigal son. If the belief in a beneficent personal divinity watching over the actions of men, able and ready to answer prayers directly, is lost, this form of religion also ceases to exist. Yet religion need not be impaired. History has preserved a famous example of the independence of religious experience from those intellectual concepts. Buddha Sakyamuni was a godless man, in the narrow meaning given to the term God in Christian theology. He discouraged formal prayer, for it ascended but to strike against the adamant vault of causal connection and to come back in a mocking echo. Yet we recognize in him a remarkably powerful and elevated religious nature. What shall we say of the intellectual vanguard of our day? What is the religion of the few bred in the atmosphere of intellectual freedom and scientific thought, whose strong faith in nature boldly discards the ragged garments inherited from the past? Such men, we venture to say, disavow any fear referring to possible action of the divine power; they have no belief in an interfering Providence, and consequently none in prayer; responsibility they feel towards none but themselves and those affected by their doings; immortality of the "Ego" they, possibly, cannot even hope for; adoration, worship, devotion, piety, in the common acceptation, are incompatible with these negations; outwardly they have no cult, return no thanks, and ask for nothing from the Powers of the world, for they know them to be deaf to such supplications and insensible to human thankfulness; narrowly construed, these words have become dead letter to them. Have these men passed beyond the religious stage? Yes, if religion consists in the intellectual beliefs they discard.

If we have in this essay insisted upon the absolute divorce which must be recognized between intellectual beliefs and

religion, it is because in the rupture of this mischievous identification lies one of the most pregnant practical conclusions which modern life can derive from psychological investigations in religious life. The most evanescent aspects of religion are precisely its intellectual formulations, including the idea of the soul, of the future life, of God, etc.; and the most exalted religious consciousness is consistent with the negative intellectual creed sketched above.

*These common conceptions*—generally regarded as essential—*rejected or ignored, the religious sense remains, modified perhaps but unweakened, in the feeling of unwholeness, of moral imperfection, of sin, to use the technical word, accompanied by the yearning after the peace of unity.* No intellectual conviction can rob man of this subjective treasure. Its reality transcends all possible belief concerning the origin and the end of things, because, as we hope to show, it is the psychic correspondent of a physiological growth, and consequently can in no wise fail, except together with that growth. Around this religious root, springing from it, or otherwise functionally related with it, cluster all the familiar religious feelings. For instance, altruistic love is implied in the efforts to attain unity of moral consciousness, for we learn in such experiences that the “sacrifice of self” gives ease to the pain of sin; the failure of one’s efforts to attain moral perfection develops the sense of dependence, of subjection, which has of late been made the centre of many definitions of religion. He who has these feelings — which are rooted in the sense of sinfulness — possesses the efficient essence of religion.

Herbert Spencer’s opinion quoted above, as well as all theories making religion depend upon the *desire to know*, instead of upon the *desire to be*, are belied by the biographies of the great founders or promoters of religions. They were not, as we shall presently see, preëminently preoccupied by the riddle of the objective universe. On the contrary they often ignored almost completely the philosophical problems referred to by the author of the *Synthetic Philosophy*. *Their concern is the attainment of moral perfection, of inward unity*; their speculative interest — as far as it exists — is the result of the activity of the ratiocinating wheels put in motion by the moral needs.

The life of Gautama, however lacking in historical certitude, leaves no doubt that what launched him into his religious career was not the goading riddle of the universe, but the deep moral struggle from which he suffered. After the Great Renunciation under the Bow tree and his victorious encounter with temptations, he declared, “I am now going to the city of Benares to establish the kingdom of righteousness,



to give light to those enshrouded in darkness, and open the gates of immortality to men. I have completely conquered all evil passions, and am no longer tied to material existence, and I, now, only live to be the prophet of perfect truth." The end he has sought—to conquer all evil passions—is now attained; henceforth he can consecrate himself to his fellowmen and live to show them the way of salvation, which he conceived as absorption in the Great Cosmic-All, made possible by triumph over every evil tendency. Much less than his predecessors did he concern himself about metaphysical queries. His disciples, it is true, obscured the practical end he had in view and the practical means devised to attain it, by developing a system of metaphysical doctrines; the same happened to Christ. The Masters were content with dealing in experiential realities; the disciples fed upon theories and abstractions. For Gautama salvation is a practical psychological reality: it is *deliverance from suffering*; from the *moral* suffering due to the thirst leading from birth to birth; thirst for pleasures, for becoming, for power. It is nearly synonymous with Schopenhauer's "will to live," and also with the Christian conception of the desires of the "Natural Man," or rather we should say that these various ideas are the outcome of the same experience: of the consciousness that the deepest cause of our suffering is lodged in warring desires, and the perception that the selfish will must be destroyed before happiness can be enjoyed. The life of Gautama expresses powerfully this truth.

Pfleiderer, in his "Philosophy of Religion," Vol. III, p.65, in commenting on the spirit of Buddhism, has the following remarkable passage:

Nowhere is the elimination of metaphysics from religion (which is so much demanded in our days) in favor of a purely ethical and psychological way of looking at things, carried out to such a degree as in Buddhism; but just on this account it proved a religion without God and without soul, a religion in which religious mystery is contracted to a mere vanishing shadow of a possible outer world, a religion, therefore, which completely lacks motive power both for progressive and deepening knowledge, and for world-conquering action. For only out of the depths of the divine mystery do the never-ceasing streams of living spiritual power issue forth; the streams which spring from the mere surface of experience do not flow to life eternal.

We quote these words to make clearer by contrast the view we are trying to make good in this part of our essay, *i. e.*, that the essence of Religion in its modern form, in contradistinction to Philosophy and Metaphysics, is properly the more or less clear consciousness of what Pfleiderer is pleased to call "the mere surface of experience," and that the power

of religion is proportional to the depth and intensity of the feelings connected with that experience. The lives of Jesus and of Buddha give a flat denial to the distinguished author of the "Philosophy of Religion." The "divine mystery" is not the craving for metaphysical knowledge, it is the universal and unquenchable thirst for wholeness, for moral harmony. We shall have occasion to observe in the chapter on self-surrender that the only apparent motive power in the deepest religious experiences is the feeling of unrighteousness and the effort towards holiness. It is only when "Salvation" was secured that St. Augustine sought for the how and the why, and elaborated out of what passed in himself the theories concerning total depravity and election. His religious beliefs were the product of ratiocination on his experience of conversion, and not the cause of it. The comparative inferiority of Buddhism to Christianity is not due to its metaphysical bareness, but to the greater weakness of the moral promptings of the Hindoo race.

The advent of Christ marks a step further in the growth of the dual moral consciousness. Psychologically his influence could be defined on one hand as bringing about a deeper and consequently a more painful differentiation of motives, a deeper cleavage of consciousness, into warring parts, and, on the other, as leading and helping men to a solution of the dualism. We know not through what crisis Christ may have passed previous to his appearing on the scene of the world. Indications of a possible moral turmoil of the same nature as that of Gautama and of other great religious leaders, are nevertheless not entirely lacking in the life of Jesus. His baptism by John in the Jordan and the temptation of forty days in the wilderness, following hard upon the baptism of repentance, according to the gospel narration, lend themselves easily to such an interpretation. Perhaps his affirmation to Nicodemus, who does not understand how a man can be born again of the Spirit, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen" (John iii:11), should be construed as a reference to his own "new birth." At any rate, when he begins his career, he possesses the serene unity for which the founder of Buddhism had had to struggle for years. Christ expresses his inner condition in august words like these: "I and the Father are one." This and like utterances are but the objective formulations of his moral unity, of his sinlessness. His central desire now is to bring men to the Father, that they also may be one with Him. Sin has estranged man from the Holy God, hence reconciliation and

the establishment of relations of perfect love with the Father presuppose the voluntary abandonment of all wickedness. This sin is regarded as the source of man's misery, and the goal of religious life becomes regeneration, by which unification of motives,—i. e., union with God, when objectively considered—is achieved.

Christ refrained from formulating elaborate doctrines of salvation, he remained close to the empirical facts of regeneration. From practical and empirical, his disciples have made religion speculative and theoretical. Although we have had as yet neither the good sense nor the courage to return to plain religious empiricism, the first steps in that direction have been taken. The later creeds of Christendom show a well-marked tendency to revert to the simple formulation of the contents of the religious consciousness, and dwell with less and less weight on the metaphysical interpretations given to them by the early church. It is a fact of common observation that our pulpits have almost completely forgotten those articles of the creed which formerly attracted chief attention, and that they are absorbed in preaching regeneration and sanctification. To be religious is no more to conjure and sacrifice, no more to adore, no more to believe in dogmas; it is to live righteously an altruistic life. A conversion unifying the newly born energies of the soul is coming to be the immediate and exclusive end of Christian preaching. And if salvation is still pictured under the form of an objective reconciliation, of a readjustment of relation between man and God, it is nevertheless affirmed with increasing emphasis that subjective renovation is its essential condition. That the need and the means of regeneration are the motor powers of Christianity, is a truism. Christ made the new birth the centre of His teaching; Paul experienced and preached it. In the first days of Christianity sudden conversions seem to have been the rule, and subjective regeneration continued to be the condition of entrance into the church until formalism displaced, more or less completely, living faith. Then baptism became, for long dark centuries, not only the symbol, but also the substitute for regeneration. Yet the word Regeneration was kept, and the church persistently and illogically affirmed that without it—or its symbol—there was no possible salvation. A side current, however, preserved the living doctrine. It is manifest in the ascetic spirit of the saints of the Middle Ages; the experience of many of them reads like the conversions of the revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Most if not all of the religious reformers of the Renaissance, as also the instigators of the great religious move-

ments of the last century—Assisi, Loyola, Luther, Fox, the Wesleys, Whitefield, Edwards, may be instanced—received their life-impulse from a conversion experience, which they embodied in the famous motto, “Salvation by faith.” Religious reformations in the Christian church have always been, at bottom, returns to the fact of deliverance from sin (what we have termed unification of motives) through faith, *i. e.*, a return to the biological teachings of Christ and of Buddha concerning the new birth.

We know the dominant rôle which this motive plays in our modern orthodox churches, particularly in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

It is less known that outside the pale of orthodoxy, in those confessions of faith which had, in their poverty of religious

<sup>1</sup> The following facts concerning the influence of Revivals may be of interest to our readers:

The Rev. Mr. Albert Barnes in his sermons on Revivals, New York, 1841, says: “. . . they [Revivals] have done more than any other single cause to form the public mind in this country.” “Society has received some of its most decided directions from these deep and far pervading revolutions.” P. 20.

We find in the memoirs of the Rev. A. Nettleton, the famous Revivalist, edited by B. Tyler: “During a period of four or five years, commencing with 1798, not less than 150 churches in New England were favored with special effusion of the Holy Spirit; and thousands of souls, in the judgment of charity, were translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God’s dear Son.” P. 13 of 5th ed.

In 1829 a circular was sent to the pastors of Congregational churches in Connecticut, with questions on the usefulness of Revivals. “It appeared [from the returns] that a large proportion of all who are now members of the Congregational churches in this state became such in consequence of Revivals; . . . that the most active and devoted Christians are among those who came into the church as fruits of Revivals, . . .”

Very interesting information regarding the opinion of the foremost “educational” men of the time on Revivals and conversions, can be gathered from the Appendix to Dr. Sprague’s “Lectures on Revivals of Religion,” 2d ed., 1833. The book itself is meant to be a text-book for Revivalists, or professional convert-makers. The Appendix is composed of letters from ten or more college presidents, including Yale, Brown University, Princeton, Amherst, Williams; and from prominent divines, as the Rev. Noah Porter, the Rev. Archibald Alexander, the Rt. Rev. Ch. M’Ilvaine, Bishop of Ohio. These gentlemen relate the Revivals they have witnessed, and express their convictions concerning their nature, and the most effective methods of conducting them. They are all, in various degrees, in sympathy with Revivals. Better than anything else to estimate the rôle played by conversion in giving direction to individual and national life in this country, are the chapters on religious life in the histories of colleges, such as Amherst, Yale, Williams, where conversion was looked upon as the normal culmination of Christian education.

sense and abundance of intellectualism, more or less dropped the corn with the husk, and whose resulting deadness had become a popular argument against their negations, a revival of the religious spirit is in process. It manifests itself in a new interest in Regeneration and in a growing sense of its meaning and necessity. The book of Edmund H. Sears on "Conversion," and especially the two essays entitled "Regeneration," one by the Rev. Thomas R. Slicer, the other by Francis C. Lowell, read before the National Conference of the Unitarian churches, held at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., Sept., 1894, are characteristic tokens of the movement we signal. The doctrinal setting is greatly changed, it is evident, but the fact itself is acknowledged as the distinguishing mark of the true Christian. "What we are concerned to know is this: Does the new birth of which I have spoken give an entrance here and now into the kingdom of heaven which can be won by no other road? I think it does. Though it seems a paradox, I believe that no one can fully know himself a child of God until he comes to realize how deeply he has sinned. . . . Such an experience, then, it seems to me, is to be desired by every man; that is to say, it is typical of the best, the most nearly perfect religious experience," said Mr. Lowell in the address mentioned. The Rev. Thomas Slicer's essay is in the same spirit, and contains nothing that suggests disagreement with the above quoted opinion.

We can profitably bring the preceding passage side by side with the following from the great Trinitarian, Jonathan Edwards:

"I am bold to say that the work of God in the conversion of one soul, considered together with the source, foundation and purchase of it, and also the benefit, end and eternal issue of it, is a more glorious work of God than the creation of the whole material universe."<sup>1</sup>

Unitarians and Calvinists agree on the question of experience, on the essence of religious life; they disagree on the theory, on the metaphysics of conversion. When the division between metaphysics and science has been fully recognized in Religion, the church will take cognizance of facts only, and leave to independent specialists the post-experiential speculations.

To sum up, religious consciousness has been gradually clearing itself from the philosophical motive with which it has been associated from the beginning. The religion of primitive man born of a sense of *physical* dependence, gradually yields, as the sense of sin is realized, to ethical re-

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<sup>1</sup> In his "Thoughts on the Revival of Religion."

ligions, in which man is actuated by a sense of *moral* dependence, or, to state the same fact in other words, by a feeling of sinfulness, of moral imperfection and weakness; he exclaims with Paul: "For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." This feeling is the religious motive as felt at our stage of development. *Religion has become — or is coming to be — the conglomerate of desires and emotions springing from the sense of sin and its release.* Silently along with the struggle for existence of individual against individual, another one, purely subjective, often eclipsing the former by its grim relentlessness and tragic seriousness, turns the heart of man at all times into a duelling ground, and some times into a hellish tempest. Those who escape least the torments of this dualism, are, it seems, the best. The fastidious conscience, as also the callous, proverbially honest man, find rising from the very centre of their being unquenchable yearnings for the attainment of a moral unity which will bring with it the deep peace and joy of which glimpses are obtained in spite of the thousand little compromises in which we wallow. The philosopher pants for what he terms the realization of himself; the Hindoo falls in ecstasy before the vision of an abode of rest from the hard conflicts of this sensuous life; the Christian prays for deliverance from sin, pardon, purification and holiness. The reduction of the dualism thus variously expressed is, in the broadest sense, what we mean by conversion.

Anticipating conclusions to be reached in the third part of the essay, we may say that moral dualisms and their reductions are the psychic correlates of the establishment of new physiological functions. Conversion might be defined in the favorite terms of Herbert Spencer, as the unification, by coördination, of the parts segregated by differentiation of the homogeneous. Instead of being an abnormal process, conversion—not necessarily the violent type which we have chosen for our analysis—is the very creating method of nature. It represents a physiological as well as a psychic step in the evolution of man.

Prejudices and ignorance have had free scope to discredit the value of the class of experiences herein dealt with. That a considerable number of reported conversions were only temporary stimulation to better living, and that some of them were mere pretence, is evident.

Concerning the permanency of conversions, the following quotations may be of interest:—The Rev. Chas. Hyde, pastor of a church in Ashford, wrote May, 1844: "His influence [A. Nettleton's] was permanently good." Concerning the eighty-two converts who were the fruit of Nettleton's activity in the parish, he writes, "Of

the character of these converts, I cannot speak particularly, except of those who are now here. Twenty-two have died, twenty-seven have removed from the place, three only have been excommunicated. The remainder are, with hardly an exception, now consistent members,—some of them pillars in the church.”—“Memoirs of Rev. A. Nettleton,” p. 89, 5th ed.

In 1832, eleven years after the Revival mentioned in the following quotation, the Rev. Dr. Porter declares: “Within about three months, I suppose there were about 250 members who supposed they had passed from death unto life. On the first Sabbath in June, 115 were added to the church, and at subsequent periods 120 besides. Of these a few have since been rejected, and others have declined from their first love. But I have not perceived that a greater proportion of hopeful conversions in this Revival than in others, previous and subsequent to it, have proved unsound. Many have died, and many have removed from our immediate connection, but those who remain, now constitute the chief strength of the church.”—From Appendix to Dr. Sprague’s “Lectures on Revivals of Religion,” 2d ed., 1833.

In “The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors of Churches in New England at a Meeting in Boston July 7, 1743,” signed by sixty-eight ministers and otherwise endorsed by forty-three others (ninety of them were from the Province of Massachusetts Bay), we read: “Yet of those who were judged hopefully converted and made a public profession of religion, there have been fewer instances of scandal and apostasy than might be expected. So that, as far as we are able to form a judgment, the face of Religion is lately changed much for the better in many of our towns and congregations.”

Similar testimonies could be multiplied at pleasure.

The present essay when complete will contain three parts. Of the two parts now published, the first is an analysis of the conversion process; it is divided into six subdivisions, corresponding to the natural phases of the experience: The Sense of Sin, Self-surrender, Faith, Joy, Appearance of Newness, The Rôle of the Will. In Part II we place, side by side, the Christian doctrines concerning Justification, Faith, the Grace of God, the Freedom of the Will, and the corresponding facts as they appear in Part I.

#### PART I. ANALYSIS OF CONVERSION.

1. SENSE OF SIN.<sup>1</sup> The sense of sin is the first manifestation of the religious experience ending in conversion. That the phrase “to be under conviction of sin” means more than mere knowledge of one’s imperfections, we shall see presently.

<sup>1</sup> To have the full meaning of the quotations introduced in the following pages, the reader will have to refer to the complete account of the conversions given in the appendix. In them the age, education, state of health, etc., of the subject will be found, together with the circumstances of his conversion. We shall assume, for the sake of brevity, that the reader has perused these records.

For an investigation into the nature and the physiological basis of the sense of sin, see Part III.

The primitive and immediate sin-qualia is variously modified by the affective value of diverse ideas concerning the nature and consequences of sin. Our records class themselves in two groups: one composed of those in which the *natural* sin-pain is altered and intensified by the belief that a divine Judge has pronounced sentence, it becomes sense of guilt and of condemnation; to these, God is first of all a Judge. The other group is made up of persons who, having escaped theological teaching, stand in the truth of nature, and of those who have outgrown its artificial instruction; for these, guilt, condemnation, fear of judgment, the need of pardon, do not exist; their experience remains untinged by speculative beliefs: they feel their sinfulness, *i. e.*, their physical and moral misery, their inability to do what they feel to be right and desire to do; they want deliverance,—of pardon they have no thought. To them God is a Helper, a Saviour, and not a Judge. To the first group salvation is a state that follows upon a legal transaction; to the second salvation is essentially a subjective affair: it is deliverance, now and for earthly life, from besetting sins.

It does not appear that the conception of God as a Judge by whom man stands condemned to eternal perdition, is particularly efficacious; it proves much less powerful than the idea of the loving Fatherhood of God. Henry Ward Beecher deploras having been imbued in his youth with these Calvinistic ideas, and thinks they retarded his entrance into the Christian life. "I thought I was an awful transgressor; every little fault seemed to make a dreadful sin; and I would say to myself, 'There! I am probably one of the reprobate.'" "For a sinner that had repented, it was thought there was pardon; but how to repent is the very thing I did not know. . . . So I used to live in perpetual fear and dread, and often wished myself dead." . . . "My feeling [at the age of fifteen] was such that if dragging myself on my belly through the street had promised any chance of resulting in good, I would have done it." . . . "If I had had the influence of a discreet, sympathetic Christian person to brood over and help and encourage me, I should have been a Christian child from my mother's lap, I am persuaded."<sup>1</sup>

We begin with quoting some experiences belonging to the first of these two groups. Edwards describes as follows the manner in which persons are wrought upon: "Persons are first awakened with a sense of their miserable condition by

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<sup>1</sup> "Beecher's Biography," by Wm. C. Beecher and Rev. S. Scoville.



nature, the danger they are in of perishing eternally, and that it is of great importance to them that they escape speedily." . . . He speaks of his own sense of sin in very strong terms: "When others have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying that it seemed to them that they were as bad as the devil himself, I thought their expression seemed exceedingly faint and feeble to represent my wickedness, . . . and yet. . . it is enough to amaze me that I have no more sense of my sin." A rather strange passage!

The Calvinistic doctrines when preached without palliation were amply sufficient to produce tragic fears and induce grave bodily disorders. The terror produced by the thought of yawning hell, ready to engulf the sinner, would dispose to submission to whatever remedy might be offered, but would not love have had a still greater potency? When fear becomes extreme, as under the ministration of Revivalists of the past centuries, it hinders the saving transformation. Expressions as strong as the following are common in the religious literature of the last two hundred years: . . . "The Lord seemed to run upon him, like a giant, throwing him to the ground, and with such a terrible discovery of sin, caused him to roar in anguish and oft rise in the night on that account, which continued for diverse months."<sup>1</sup> Every one knows the rôle these morbid fears played in the hysterical manifestations which have so often disgraced Revivals.<sup>2</sup> Concerning such "bodily exercises" Edwards wrote: ". . . they have often suffered many needless distresses of thought, in which Satan probably has a great hand, to entangle them, . . . and sometimes the distemper of melancholy has been evidently mixed, of which, when it happens, the tempter seems to make great advantages." . . . But we cannot dwell on this interesting chapter; let us pass to more normal experiences of the sense of sin.

Finney: "I became very restless. A little consideration convinced me that I was by no means in a state of mind to go to heaven, if I should die. . . . On a Sabbath evening in the autumn of 1821, I made up my mind that I would settle the question of my soul's salvation at once, that, if it were possible, *I would make my peace with God.*" Some days later, going in the morning to his office, he was assailed by such questions as: "What are you waiting for? Did you not promise to give your heart

<sup>1</sup>"The Fulfilling of the Scriptures," Flemming, ed. 1671.

<sup>2</sup>See, for instance, pp. 131-169 on the Kentucky Revival of 1800, in "History of the Presbyterian Church," by Davidson, 1847.

to God? Are you endeavoring to work out a righteousness of your own?" *P.* had a very clear and vivid idea of sin. He was kept awake and tossed in bed, for fear of the Judgment. He knew he would be lost. The most potent influence was the thought of the Judgment itself, not the fear of punishment. *M.*: "As I saw myself drifting down, and friends who at one time would have gladly recognized and courted my company shunned me, I sometimes was almost at the point of asking God to forgive me and *make me a better man.* . . . I became a wreck, separated from wife and children. Poverty stared me in the face almost always." . . . At a later period he had one night a vision of God: "He said to me, 'Thus far shalt thou go and no further. You have despised Me and my Son. You have gone into the ways of sin and death. Now you are guilty and condemned.' And as I lay on my back on the bed, it seemed as if every sin I had committed came up before me. God spoke again as at first and added: 'If you will turn to Me now, I will forgive you.'" (See also appendix, case of *A.*) *F.*, on hearing a sermon on Luke x:42, feels that there was something else needed in his life, "the sermon had made me feel miserable. . . . My moral disposition was somewhat crushed by the sense of my sin. . . . On Feb. 24th between 11 and 12 A. M., I could bear the weight of my sins no longer. . . . I was affected most by my sins and my Saviour's great love."

In the second group we shall see the sense of sin in a more natural aspect:—St. Augustine has not a thought for his happiness or misery in a future life. He lives in his subjective reality; condemnation and punishment he ignores. God compels him to see himself. . . . "setting me before my face, that I might see how foul I was, how crooked and defiled, bespotted and ulcerous. And I beheld and stood aghast; and whither to flee from myself I found not. And if I sought to turn my eyes off from myself. . . . Thou again didst set me over against myself and thrustest me before my eyes, that I might find out mine iniquity and hate it. . . . What said I not against myself? With what scourge of condemnation lashed I not my soul, that it might follow me striving to go after Thee! . . . I was troubled in spirit, most vehemently indignant that I entered not into Thy will and covenant, O my God!"<sup>1</sup>

John B. Gough, the famous temperance orator, is moved to renovation by his misery, by nothing else: "I had no hope of ever becoming a respectable man again—not the slightest—for it appeared to me that every chance of restoration to

<sup>1</sup> "Confessions of St. Augustine."

decent society and of reformation were gone forever. . . . Utterly wretched and abandoned, I have stood by the railway track with a vague wish to lie across it, drink myself into oblivion, and let the cars go over me.”<sup>1</sup> *G.*'s condition was as pitiable as that of Gough when he arrived in Worcester. The kindness of a lady made him look within. He thought that “if there was a God that could save a drunkard, I would let Him.” “I had no other thought but that if there was a God disposed to save me, I would let Him. I said, ‘Here I am.’”<sup>2</sup> In the experience of *O.* will not be found a word referring to the need of pardon, or fear of punishment; he wanted deliverance from the shame and degradation of drunkenness, that was all. *L.* wrote: “I had no desire for anything good, only at times there would come a longing in my heart for something better. But it was soon over, and I would, if possible, go deeper into sin.” Later, when he realized that if he continued in the same way he would die, he sought for salvation; “I did not realize that I was a sinner, only that I was a drunkard. And I think my prayer was, ‘O Lord, take away this appetite, I cannot do it myself.’” *K.* has but one thought—to become good: “God sent an arrow of conviction to my soul, and for the first time I saw it as God sees it; O, how vile and black my heart looked! I thought that I would give the whole world to become as good as those Salvation Army people.” *I.*: “When I got utterly hopeless, helpless, in the darkest despair, when I felt the slavery of sin . . . when I knew that I was utterly and forever lost, . . . then God raised up a human instrument. My employer put me in the Christian home [for intemperate men]. . . . I wanted to escape from the evil effects of my sins, in my physical life, but I do not especially recollect any desire to seek deliverance from all my sinful nature.” Referring to his conversion he says, “Yet I believe that the thought was more to escape from the bondage of the appetite for drink than from the whole sinful man.” *E.*: “In all this period [up to conversion], I never had a desire to reform on religious grounds, but all my pangs were due to some terrible remorse I used to feel after a heavy carousal; the remorse taking the shape of regret after my folly in wasting my life in such a way — a man of superior talents and education.” During the conversion-crisis he was shown that he had “never touched the *eternal*, *i. e.*, God, and that, if I died then, I must inevitably be lost:” . . . “there was no terror in

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<sup>1</sup> John B. Gough, “Autobiography.”

<sup>2</sup> A little before he had said that during that night memorable to him, he knew that if he died, he would go to hell.

it; I felt God's love so powerfully upon me that only a mighty sorrow crept over me that I had lost all through my own folly, and what was I to do? What could I do? I did not repent even. God never asked me to repent. All I felt was I am undone, and God cannot help it, although He loves me. No fault on the part of the Almighty."

In the chapter on the Sense of Sin in Part III, we attempt an analysis of the feeling of sin; here we desire to remark only that the conglomerate of affective experiences known by that name — made up essentially of general physical discomforts due to unhealthy living (the yearning of the flesh after righteousness), and of conflicting moral tendencies, whose painfulness has also its physical basis — is in many, perhaps in most, cases complicated with the affective value of various theological conceptions, such as responsibility to a divine Judge, possible condemnation to eternal misery, etc. Although these ideas originally derive their *reality timbre* from the elemental sense of sin, yet, strangely enough, when they are once accredited, they frequently supplant it by the powerful emotional reaction they arouse, and the grosser emotions of apprehension and fear pass for the sense of sin. As, in many cases, these primitively anthropomorphic conceptions are ignored without apparent detriment to the progress of the Regeneration-process, the natural and immediate working of the sense of sin might safely be trusted.

2. SELF-SURRENDER. Self-surrender is the turning-point in conversion. We might expect to find the will striving with increased ardor as its antagonists yield ground. Strangely enough, that which we commonly term "will" seems to weaken as deliverance approaches, and, against all expectation, the victory is won when the self-assertiveness of the individual has given place to complete resignation to "the will of God." This self-surrender motive is generally considered an essential condition of the higher religious life:—

When all that separated from God is taken away, when every inordinate desire has undergone the process of excision, so as to be reduced into its place, and to be put into entire position and agreement with one great and overruling desire of conformity to God's will, then begins the new life in the higher sense of the term. The soul no longer possesses anything which it calls its own, but may rather be spoken of as a *subject*, and instead of possessing, may be said to be possessed by another. Disrobed of the life of nature, it is clothed with the life of grace.—From "Correspondences of Faith and Views of Mme. Guyon," by Henry T. Cheever.

Confidence and resignation, the sense of subjection to a higher will which rules the course of events, but which we do not fully comprehend, are the fundamental principles of every better re-

ligion.—“Unterhaltungen” of Goethe with Chancellor Müller, p. 131.

Resignation to the will of God is the whole of piety. . . . Our resignation may be said to be perfect when we rest in His will as our end, as being itself most just and right and good.—“Fifteen Sermons,” by Joseph Butler, Lord Bishop of Durham. Sermon on the Love of God.

In the famous “Sure Guide to Heaven” of Joseph Alleine, we find among the directions for Salvation: “Resign up all thy powers and faculties and thy whole interest to be His.” The current phrases: “to accept or receive Christ,” “to yield one’s self to God,” or the like, are expressive of the same psychological reality.

At this point of the conversion-process the sense of sin, of impotency, of dependence, is about to pass over into confidence, trust, love and joy. Let us attempt an analysis of this turning-point and its surroundings.

In his “Confessions” we see St. Augustine violently lamenting over his double-direction will. For a number of years his sense of duality had grown in intensity. When the final crisis is upon him, he is clearly aware of the one remaining thing that prevents him from “entering into God’s will and covenant.” “The very toys of toys and vanities of vanities, my ancient mistresses, still held me; they plucked my fleshly garment and whispered softly, ‘Dost thou cast us off; from that moment shall not this or that be lawful for thee forever?’” It seems that this desire was the last bond that prevented the realization of the peace he sought. From this moment the struggle becomes a tug-of-war between two currents, two classes of affections: the love of his mistresses and the love of God.

“But now it spoke very faintly [the voice of his mistresses]. For on that side whither I had set my face and whither I trembled to go, there appeared unto me the chaste dignity of continency, serene, yet not relaxedly gay, honestly alluring me to come and doubt not, . . . and she smiled on me [and said]. . . . cast thyself upon Him, fear not, He will not withdraw Himself that thou shouldst fall; cast thyself fearlessly upon Him, He will receive and will heal thee! And I blushed exceedingly, for that I yet heard the muttering of those toys, and hung in suspense.” The struggle goes on; “a mighty storm, bringing a shower of tears,” supervenes and indicates the progress of surrendering. But trust in God’s forgiveness, and in His readiness to deliver him from his sin is not yet complete. He exclaims: “‘And Thou, O Lord—how long? how long, Lord, wilt thou be angry, forever? Remember not our former iniquities,’ for I felt that I was held by them. I sent up these sorrowful words: ‘How long? how long? to-morrow and to-morrow? Why not now? why is there not this hour an end

to my uncleanness ?' ” Presently he thinks he hears a voice telling him to take up and read the word of God. This supposed manifestation of God's interest works hope and faith in him, for he remembers one Antony who was converted through an oracle. The first passage on which his eyes fall is, “Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strifes and envyings; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in concupiscence.” “Instantly at the end of this sentence, by a light, as it were, of serenity infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away,” and now what he feared to be parted from, his mistresses, had become a joy to part with. This voice and this passage, taken as indication of God's paternal care for him, contributed the impulse yet lacking to enable him to achieve the sacrifice of that which had been for years his delight. Self-surrender was absolute; consciousness unified; joy and peace followed in the track of grief and bitter contrition. That day St. Augustine began his Christian career. We note that the transformation took place when the last inhibition to the godward current gave way. Until then no peace, no unity, no conversion.

It should be noticed that although the conversion-conflict may be compared to the daily moral struggles with which we are all familiar, it differs from them in some such way as a fight to the death differs from a fight for first blood. In the latter case the whole man is not involved, only a few eccentric cells and nerve paths are in play. It is a skirmish of some stray soldiers. In the former event, the hostile individuals have been gathering from all over the land, leaving no stragglers behind. Every one has been called upon to join one or the other of the armies, and now the conflict is final: the issue involves the whole man, every cell and nerve fibre. One by one the divisions of the weaker army are destroyed, until there remains but the main body, and then the final crisis comes. In the case we have just considered, every conscious resistance but one had yielded; this one overpowered, the victory is complete, the land passes under a new ruler. Henceforth all strife ceases; harmony, a sense of unity and corresponding joy pervade the organism. Everything becomes new, the foreign as well as the internal policy has changed, and a new organic life begins.

It is evident that although the consciousness of sin is specifically the same in every individual, the particular points at issue may differ very much. But whatever it may be, the tendency, or the direction of the effort, is always the same: unification of consciousness through the subjection of a class of desires in opposition to another class of desires.

In the case of Finney the opposing tendencies finally crystallize around one well defined feeling, *pride*. His unwillingness to be seen praying betrays unreadiness to abandon himself absolutely to the promptings of God's spirit, and to espouse without reserve all the consequences and results involved in the new relation to God which he craves. This inhibition, although trivial in its external aspect, brings to light the fundamental resistance : consideration for self, self-assertion.

He knew in a general way what was required of him. "I had to submit myself to the righteousness of God through Christ." To conceal himself from possible passers-by he creeps into a space left open between two large trees fallen to the ground. "In attempting to pray I would hear a rustling in the leaves, as I thought, and would stop and look up to see if somebody were not coming. This I did several times. . . . Finally I found myself verging fast to despair. . . . I began to feel deeply that it was too late, that it must be that I was given up of God and was past hope. . . . I again thought I heard some one approach me, and I opened my eyes to see whether it were so. But right there the revelation of my pride of heart, as the great difficulty that stood in the way, was distinctly shown to me. An overwhelming sense of my wickedness in being ashamed to have a human being see me on my knees before God, took such powerful possession of me that I cried at the top of my voice, and exclaimed that I would not leave that place if all the men on earth and all the devils in hell surrounded me. . . . The sin appeared awful and infinite. It broke me down before the Lord." At that instant a passage of the Bible comes to his mind and brings a flood of light, and Finney finds himself for the first time in the possession of a heart-faith which fills him with peace and the assurance of salvation. Self-annihilation, absolute self-surrender brought with it joy beyond words, the sense of confidence in God—*Faith*—and of pardon. Pride is often the centre of the residual resistance.

The sense of sin, as we have observed in the preceding chapter, is at times little more than a feeling of physical misery, the anguish of the sickened flesh. In such cases the expressions "regret" and "desire for relief" should properly take the place of "remorse" and of "repentance," which designate experiences modified by specific intellectual considerations ignored by the persons we speak of. This primitive consciousness is especially noticeable in persons addicted to some gross vice. Drunkards, for instance, frequently show no sign of the sense of condemnation, although fully aware of their utter

worthlessness. They feel shame at their degradation, but are not conscious of any responsibility towards God for breaking His laws. They do not exclaim, "Oh, my sins, my sins!" but rather: "Oh, cursed wretch that I am!" The ideas of punishment, of eternal death or of damnation make no impression upon them; the realities of their daily life go beyond the pictorial power of imagination. What they want is deliverance—deliverance from the unbearable misery of this life.

Let us examine, with reference to self-surrender, the regeneration of some grossly vicious persons.

S. H. Hadley, superintendent of the old Jerry McAuley Water Street Mission:—Thirteen years ago, in the Water Street Mission in New York city, after having listened to twenty-five or thirty persons relating in words burning with earnestness their deliverance from dypsomania, he made up his mind that he "would be saved or die right there!" When the invitation was given for those desiring to reform, to come forward, he accepted the call and knelt down at the foot of the platform with a number of other drunkards "How I wondered if I would be saved! if God would help me! I was a total stranger; but I felt I had sympathy, and it helped me. Jerry [the famous Jerry McAuley] made the first prayer. I shall never forget it. He said: 'Dear Saviour, won't you look down in pity on these poor souls? They need your help, Lord; they can't get along without it. Blessed Jesus, these poor sinners have got themselves into a bad hole. Won't you help them out? Speak to them, Lord, do, for Jesus' sake—amen!'" Then they were asked to pray for themselves. "How I trembled as he approached me! Though I had knelt down with the determination to give my heart to God, when it came to the very moment of grand decision, I felt like backing out. The devil knelt by my side and whispered in my ear crimes I had forgotten for months: 'What are you going to do about such and such matters if you start to be a Christian to-night? Now you cannot afford to make a mistake; had not you better think this matter over and try to fix up some of the troubles you are in, and then start?' Oh what a conflict was going on in my poor soul! A blessed whisper said, 'Come!' The devil said, 'Be careful!' Jerry's hand was on my head. He said, 'Brother, pray.' I said, 'Can't you pray for me?' Jerry said, 'All the prayers in the world won't save you unless you pray for yourself.' I halted but a moment, and then, with a breaking heart, I said: 'Dear Jesus, can you help me?' Dear reader, never with mortal tongue can I describe that moment. Although up to that moment my soul had been filled with indescribable gloom, I felt the glorious brightness of the noonday sun



shine into my heart ; I felt I was a free man. Oh, the precious feeling of safety, of freedom, of resting on Jesus! . . . . From that moment till now I have never wanted a drink of whiskey." This man has given his life to the rescue of drunkards. In this record the approach towards complete surrender can be followed step by step. He had laid aside pride enough to respond to the invitation and thereby confess publicly his inability to cease drinking. Old crimes, and that which the settlement of them will require of him, pass before his mind ; for a moment he hesitates to accept the attitude towards them which submission to God would demand. His humble prayer for succor, and its effect, indicate that all the resistance of which he was conscious had given way, and that, as he called upon Christ, he threw himself unreservedly at his feet.

Case of *O.* (Appendix.) After every drinking-bout until the last, *O.* felt confident that he would be able to restrain his appetite. The sorrow and deep shame that accompanied his last debauch were also experienced after the preceding ones, but the *one* characteristic element of this last post-debauch state was that all hopes of self-deliverance had left him. For the first time he felt convinced that his passion was stronger than his determination ; the light that had illumined the horizon had gone out ; the future was all darkness ; no effort of his could avert the coming calamity. In that state of will-surrender he turned his doubting thoughts to God for help, ready, as he has said to me, to do whatever God would require of him. In this attitude he found the strength he lacked.

Case of *E.* (Appendix.) An Oxford graduate, the son of a clergyman of the Church of England. "About mid-day I made on my knees the first prayer before God for twenty years. I did not ask to be forgiven ; I felt that was no good, for I would be sure to fall again. Well, what did I do? *I committed myself to Him in the profoundest belief that my individuality was going to be destroyed, that He would take all from me, and I was willing.* In such a surrender lies the secret of a holy life. From that hour drink has had no terrors for me ; I never touch it, never want it. The same thing occurred with my pipe : after being a regular smoker from my twelfth year, the desire for it went at once and has never returned. So with every known sin, the deliverance in each case being permanent and complete. . . . Since I gave up to God all ownership in my own life, He has guided me in a thousand ways, and has opened my path for me in a way almost incredible to those who do not enjoy the blessing of a truly surrendered life."

Case of *K.* (Appendix.) A colored man. "I began attending

their meetings [the Salvation Army meetings] in the Opera House. The oftener I went, the more miserable I became; but I could not stay away; there seemed to be some unseen power that forced me to go, and so I went until I could endure it no longer. The night I went to the altar it seemed to me it was a last chance for me. I went to the altar to give my heart to God, not a part, but every idol, my time, my talents, and all. I made a full surrender of everything, and God for Christ's sake set my captive soul free. . . . My pen fails me to describe the joy that thrilled my soul. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The preceding cases illustrate conversions in which resistance focuses on one special vice. The struggle is against one well determined appetite or desire. In the generality of cases this concentration is not apparent; the subject is in presence of his sinful tendencies; no particular sin is singled out. The following are examples of such diffused sin-consciousness:

Eleanor Emerson in the course of her awakening came to the discovery that "all my external goodness sprung from the motives of self-exaltation; or, what is still more displeasing to God, that it was designed as a substitute for the righteousness of Christ." She tried repeatedly to "reconcile myself to the idea of being in His hand as the clay in the hand of the potter. But, alas, I found this idea more and more dreadful." The prayer meeting, where she knew she would be urged to make a decision and yield herself to the solicitation of God's voice, was a terror to her soul. Although she had determined to attend no more, being one day invited, she concluded to go for the last time, not, however, from a commendable motive, and "in all the obstinacy of despair to hold up my head, which had long been bowed down, like a bulrush." Various feelings agitated her during the meeting: "My soul seemed humbled in the dust in view of my condemnation; while I was constrained to cry in spirit, 'Even so, Lord Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments!' At this view of my wretched, hopeless situation, the following words passed sweetly through my mind, and with such delightful energy as thrilled through my whole soul, and filled me with rapture unspeakable:

'Jesus, to thy dear faithful hand,  
My naked soul I trust.'

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<sup>1</sup> The person through whom this testimony was secured, writes: "He was a very bad man and, since conversion, he has lived honestly for nine years. He was the keeper of a saloon and gambling den, and, of course, gave up that means of support. He has since struggled with poverty, ill-health, and old age. I have been profoundly impressed with the mystery of an experience like his."

“ At this most cordial disposal of myself into the hand of a glorious Redeemer, the thick clouds seemed to disperse, and give place to such a transporting view of the glorious Saviour as no words can express.”

The crisis of John Wesley as he describes it in his journal, is in every essential respect analogous to the preceding one. Until the event called his conversion, he had not obtained that organic transformation which works unity in the moral consciousness. In his famous letter to Law he describes himself as groaning under the effort to fulfill the works of the law and to find in them peace and justification. Elsewhere he says, “ In this refined way of trusting to my own works and my own righteousness, I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein.” For a number of weeks preceding his conversion, he was thoroughly convinced that he was not a Christian, and that he needed a radical change to become one. He resolved to seek the living faith by absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon his own works of righteousness, on which he had really grounded his hope of salvation, though he knew it not, he tells us; and by praying continually for a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for him as his sole justification. He found that assurance about a quarter before nine Wednesday, May 24th, 1738, according to his own statement. Whitefield’s experience, as far as it is recorded, conforms with that of Wesley.

Case of *P.* (Appendix.) Had lost all hope of salvation; his uppermost thought in the meeting in which what follows took place, was that he would never be able to obtain pardon and salvation. At the close of the sermon the minister started the hymn, “ Just as I am, without one plea.”<sup>1</sup> He joined in the singing. Suddenly the Spirit of God—to use his own expression—seemed to make every word of that first line work within him. He felt the depth of its meaning and its truth regarding him. With all his heart he sang: “ Without one plea,” and realized as he had never done that Jesus Christ’s sacrifice was for his benefit, †that he also was intended to be saved; Christ was calling for him. These thoughts and their accompanying feelings flashed like lightning upon him while the singing proceeded. The last line expressed his very desire, “ O Lamb of God, I come, I come.” Before the last word of the first stanza was pronounced, he realized that his

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<sup>1</sup> “ Just as I am,—without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bidd’st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come.”

sins were forgiven and that he was saved. When, while the second verse was being sung, the pastor, walking down the aisle, stopped near him, arrested by his illumined face—and offering his hand said, “You are a Christian”—“Yes, sir,” he responded from the fullness of his heart; a minute before he had despaired of ever being saved.

What was required from Rev. J. O. Peck was—as he thought—his consecration to God’s service. “Sharp and short the struggle. Then and there, I dropped on my knees and dedicated myself to God’s service from that hour. I prayed until I felt peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. When I arose the storm had ceased and the sun was shining. I was in a new world, etc.”

We have chosen the preceding cases among many for the clearness with which they set forth the self-surrender movement. Many others might be added nearly as explicit, for instance: “I yielded myself to what I conceived to be Higher Guidance. I yielded with trembling, but with importunity. At the close of the period I found myself at one with all things.” Or, “I found my heart glowing with the most ardent love towards the Saviour. Tears flowed without control. The language of my heart was, O my dear Saviour, come and take everlasting possession of my soul. . . .” The verbal expressions vary, but their purport is always the same: I feel, realize, my absolute incapacity to live righteously by my own endeavors; it is all over, I am undone. From my efforts can come no righteousness, no peace, no salvation; now, I lay down my arms and am unreservedly ready to do whatever Thou shalt command. This attitude corresponds to a peculiar physiological condition.

The self-surrender movement may not be always explicitly mentioned, but it is always implied in what is expressed; for instance, in such sentences as the following: “I did not dare to give myself wholly to Him”—(Dr. John Livingstone); or, “I cannot say that I felt strong, but rather weak like a child, and yet not in a sense that I must sin”—(J.); or many expressions of *M.* and of *I.* in the story of their remarkable transformation; or in Jonathan Edwards’ striking expression that God’s absolute sovereignty and justice with respect to salvation and damnation has often appeared to him *delightful!* (See Edwards’ Conversion.) The attitude of absolute dependence could not be more beautifully expressed. Man’s reason revolts against the abuse of power of a Creator who dooms his creatures to endless perdition, before the foundation of the world. But Edwards’ “abandon” to the will of God gives him such a sweet trust and peace that even this apparently fiendish decree brings delight to his heart.

He is the lover who, careless of the fate awaiting him, gives himself up to fond embraces, and would find even death acceptable were it to come from the hands of the beloved.

The following observation from "A Narrative of Surprising Conversions in Northampton," by Edwards, deserves quotation here: "The drift of the Spirit of God in His legal strivings with persons, has seemed most evidently to be to make way for, and to bring to, a conviction of their absolute dependence on His Sovereign power and grace and the universal need of a Mediator, by leading them more and more to a sense of their exceeding wickedness and guiltiness in His sight: . . . that they can in no wise help themselves, and that God would be wholly just and righteous in rejecting them, . . . and in casting them off forever. . . ."

A considerable part of our material having come from individuals of common school education, and conversion being often related after a considerable interval from its occurrence, it cannot be expected that every subject will be able to dissect his experience finely enough to set forth clearly the various phases of so complicated a process. The difficulty of introspection is extreme because of the emotional tempest that usually reigns at the time. A gentleman of fair culture answered as follows question five: "I think some of the questions under No. 5 are rather ridiculous, as if a person could remember the various thoughts and feelings in his mind and heart at the moment of conversion!" Despite this difficulty, surrender is explicitly mentioned in most of the records.

The reader has likely noticed the striking diversity in the feelings apparently uppermost in the conversion-experience of various persons. Some give prominence to their desire for humility; others are absorbed in the feeling of their impotency and unutterable woe; still others are annihilated and lie prostrate in complete self-surrender, while the attention of some is held by the warmth of confidence, — they speak of hope, of trust; and still others seem to ignore humility and their powerlessness, and are carried on by a love impulse to faith in God and Christ. The words sin, humility, impotency, utter wretchedness, despair, self-surrender, hope, trust, love, faith — in the order we have placed them — mark in a rough way stages in the evolution of the conversion-process. According to one's temperament and disposition, or depending upon more trivial circumstances, certain phases of it stand out in more intense color and occupy longer the field of consciousness. It is evident that humiliation cannot precede, but will follow upon the discovery of one's own wickedness; that impotency will be realized only after repeated defeats; that it may be

accompanied by despair; that absolute self-surrender can be consented to only when the former stage has been realized, and that living faith, born of loving confidence, cannot precede, but may follow upon the realization of the need of help. These words, then, describe the stages of a continuous process. That process may stop anywhere and never be completed, as in the case of most men. Although it must be looked upon as continuous, there is in it a turning point which divides it into two parts: the "way down" and the "way up;" or the "negative" and the "positive" phase. Between absolute surrender at the end of the way down and the first glimpse of hope, constituting the first step of the second part of the process, there is a change of direction. That change is *conversion*, if one wishes to use the word in its strict etymological meaning; and the positive phase is properly called *regeneration*; it might be termed *atonement*; while the negative stage might be named *diremption*. Although it may seem that there is no necessary link between the end of the way down and the beginning of the way up, the process never comes to an end at this point, while it frequently stops somewhere in the negative phase. There are, nevertheless, a number of cases where what appears to be complete self-surrender is not immediately followed by the advent of the upward-move. Confidence and trust, love, are made impossible by some inhibition, as in the case of Livingstone, who could not believe that the Lord Jesus was willing to receive and save a wretch who had resisted His grace so long; or in that of Bunyan, who for years did not know whether he was included among the elect or not. Gardiner, after being delivered from his sin, had no joy because he did not know whether eternal damnation was not properly to be his lot. But it should not be thought that the efficient cause of the arrest of the process is necessarily an intellectual doubt. Much, rather, are the doubts the token of a remaining inward resistance, ignored perhaps by the subject.

3. FAITH. We have seen that when self-surrender is complete, a turning point is reached at which the affective state changes *toto cælo*. Despair, guilt and the feeling of isolation are superseded by joy, the sense of forgiveness, confidence and faith. This small word "Faith" has probably received more attention in Christian countries than any other word belonging to religion, if we except the names "God" and "Jesus." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John iii:36)—"Justification by Faith"—"The just shall live by Faith"—"Believe [have Faith] and thou shalt be saved."—From generation to generation these mighty phrases

have filled the mouths of Christians ; they have passed from heart to heart and quickened them to better living ; about this word, endless discussions have arisen and momentous battles have been fought, councils have decreed, creeds have been built up. This word must have a potency of meaning adequate to the rôle it has played ; to what psychological reality does it correspond ?

The most perplexing confusion reigns as to the use of the terms "belief," "faith," "knowledge." There is in religious circles a deep-rooted conviction that there exists a something different from intellectual belief and knowledge ; that obscure *something* is, by general agreement, called Faith ; but what that mysterious word means is too vaguely perceived, it seems, to allow of a consistent use of clearly differentiated terms. One defines Faith as "the intuition of eternal verities," another as "the organ for the supernatural and divine ;" the definition in Hebrews xi:1 is known to all. Others enlarge it to make it simply a "conviction of truth founded on testimony," and use "belief" as synonymous with "faith ;" for instance, Hodge in his "Systematic Theology," and the English Bible.

Assuming at the beginning of our investigation that there is a specific psychic state which is, or can be, accompanied by certainty as to the reality of intellectual conceptions, religious or other (a certainty not secured by the ordinary processes of the mind when seeking to arrive at scientific truth), we shall designate this negatively defined unknown by "Faith," to distinguish it from opinion, belief and knowledge. These three words — opinion, belief, knowledge — we regard as denoting various degrees of conviction resting on grounds of the same nature, *i. e.*, on rational cognition. Thus we may escape confusion and ambiguity. Furthermore, for the sake of simplification, we shall designate by the word "belief" the class containing these three subdivisions.

We are not concerned here with the psychology of faith and of belief in general, but only in as far as they are found in conversion.

The great Jonathan Edwards furnishes an interesting contribution to this part of our study. "From my childhood up, my mind has been full of objections against the doctrine of God's Sovereignty, in choosing whom He would to eternal life, and rejecting whom He pleased ; leaving them eternally to perish and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced and fully satisfied as to this Sovereignty of God, and His justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to His Sovereign pleasure.

But never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it."<sup>1</sup>

Reason convinced without any intellectual argument by the extraordinary influence of God: this is the work of Faith. We note in this experience the complete absence of the intellectual process by which scientific conviction is produced. The following<sup>2</sup> (case of *B.* in appendix) describes the experience of a clergyman now in the prime of life:

“. . . . For three days the wild tide swept and surged past and around me. I felt I must give up the Gospel of John and, if so, my Christian faith also; and with this the universe would go. . . . I yielded myself to what I conceived to be Higher Guidance. . . . At the close of the period I found myself at one with all things. Peace, that was all. . . . When I looked at myself, I found that I was standing on the old ground, but cherishing a toleration of doubt and a sincere sympathy with doubters such as I had never known before. . . . I could take the logical standpoint, and could see that they were quite convincing [the arguments], and yet my inward peace of belief was in no way disturbed.” . . . In this case, arguments bring to the ground a system of beliefs. After an emotional crisis, in which criticism plays no part, the old intellectual construction is found standing firmly, in spite of blows and buffets more than reasonably able to throw it down. The ground of belief has undergone a specific change; arguments no more affect the new structure than blows affect a shadow. It is no longer belief, it has become an object of Faith.

Few religious experiences are as perplexing to a class of earnest Christians as that of John Wesley. At the age of thirty-five, after having served zealously and successfully in the ministry of the English church for ten years, and attaining, by constancy of purpose in the pursuit of holiness, the moral worthiness which he himself avows in the searching of heart made soon after his return from Georgia to England, he repeatedly declares that he is not a Christian. Not that he experienced doubts as to the Christian beliefs (he had doubts, it is true, on the ship when returning to America, but only such doubts as are unavoidable in simple belief.

<sup>1</sup> From the conversion of President Edwards.

<sup>2</sup> Communicated to us by Dr. Burnham.



They soon vanished and left him at complete rest as to the truth of the doctrines), but that his religious state, his inner unsatisfied needs, a duality, compelled him to recognize that to be a Christian was to be more than what he was. "But does all this [his devoted and self-sacrificing labors] make one acceptable to God? Does all I ever did or can know, say, give, do, suffer, justify me in His sight? or . . . that I am as touching outward, moral righteousness, blameless? or (to come closer yet) *the having a rational conviction of all the truths of Christianity?* Does all this give a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a Christian? By no means. . . . All these things, though when ennobled by faith in Christ, they are holy and just and good, yet without it are 'dung and dross.'" He concludes that he has "fallen short of the glory of God," and sets to work to find the Faith which he lacks. A long period of increasing self-abasement follows, "which must ever precede true, living faith in the Son of God," says his biographer. The sense of self-righteousness slowly dies, and he is brought to the point where complete self-surrender becomes possible. Then, suddenly, at a meeting, while some one was reading the famous Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, "about a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart, through faith in Christ, *I felt* my heart strangely warmed, *I felt* I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for Salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and had saved me from the law of sin and death."<sup>1</sup> Notice the use of the word *feel*:—a psycho-physiological transformation no more dependent upon intellectual information and belief than a sudden turn in the general condition of a patient depends upon the medical theories he holds. An interesting remark can be made here concerning the influence of suggestion: it is as the change which God works in the heart is being described that the very same transformation takes place in Wesley.

Doubts vanished from the mind of St. Augustine at the moment he gave up the last impediment to a holy life:<sup>2</sup> his unrighteous loves. Indeed, intellectual doubts played no part in the conversion to Christianity of this subtle dialectician. This inconsistent professor of intellectual conviction forgets his art when most needed, it seems, and receives

<sup>1</sup> From Wesley's journal as quoted in Moore's "Biography of Wesley."

<sup>2</sup> It would be in closer agreement with the facts to use the passive form and say: when the last impediment to a holy life gave way.

bodily the Christian doctrines on the strength of a change of heart! The victory over his passion becomes the ground of faith in doctrine. Who would wonder at his abandoning his profession after such a shaming experience of its uselessness! After the long struggles so acutely described in his "Confessions,"— a contest exclusively moral, as the reader may convince himself by referring to the account of his conversion, pp. 328 and 329, he finally reaches the point of complete self-surrender. Even those "very toys of toys and vanities of vanities," which were the obstacle to the unification of his life-motive, he is now able to renounce; thereupon, "by a light, as it were, of serenity, infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away." The son of Monica has exchanged his vacillating belief for Faith; henceforth he is to devote himself to the triumph of the Gospel of Christ and the establishment of right religious beliefs.

The neuropathic Mrs. Eleanor Emerson thus glowingly describes her ecstatic feelings at the time of her conversion: "At this most cordial disposal of myself into the hand of a glorious Redeemer, the thick clouds seemed to disperse, and give place to such a transporting view of the glorious Saviour as no words can express. With an eye of faith I beheld the transcendent glory more conspicuous than that of the natural sun in meridian splendor, when bursting from behind the thickest clouds. I could no more doubt of the being and divinity of Christ than of my own existence. He was presented to my spiritual view in such substantial glory as caused me to adopt the exclamation of the astonished Thomas: 'My Lord and my God!' . . . The greatness of God's character and the glorious scheme of redemption filled me with wonder, admiration and joy." The belief in the divinity of Christ and the doctrines involved in the scheme of redemption, is made to pass, by that ecstatic irradiation supervening upon the removal of the last inhibition, into the domain of Faith.

Finney was convinced that "the Bible was the true word of God" and of the truth of the Christian doctrines respecting salvation before he thought himself a Christian; and yet he tells us that "in this state [the state he describes as the baptism of the Holy Ghost], I was taught the doctrine of justification by faith as a present experience. . . . Indeed, I did not know at all what it meant by the passage, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'" Neither did Luther understand justification by faith; tortured by his conscience and by an unsatisfied thirst for union with God, he writhed in agony until peace came and with it the *understanding* of salvation

by Faith. This living experience became the power of the Reformation and his chief stay against Rome's "salvation by works." It was also the centre of Finney's preaching as of all the great Revivals this country has known.<sup>1</sup>

Frequently, especially in persons of little intellectual development, conversion and Faith are not preceded by intellectual conviction of the truth of the Bible, of the divinity of Christ, of the atonement, etc.; there may be either absolute uncertainty about these doctrines, or even complete ignorance of their existence. Jonathan Edwards, whom this fact had not escaped, was a good deal perplexed and puzzled by this lack of deference on the part of the facts to theology. "It must needs be confessed that Christ is not always distinctly and explicitly thought of in the first sensible act of grace (though most commonly He is); but sometimes He is the object of the mind only implicitly. Thus sometimes when persons have seemed evidently to be stripped of all their own righteousness and to have stood self-condemned as guilty of death, they have been comforted with a joyful and satisfactory view that the mercy and grace of God are sufficient for them; that their sins, though never so great, shall be no hindrance to their being accepted; that there is mercy enough in God for the whole world, and the like, when they give no particular or distinct thought of Christ." (From a "Narrative of Surprising Conversions in Northampton.") But Edwards adds: *when questioned* "it appears that the revelation of the mercy of God in the Gospel, is the ground of their encouragement and hope," *i. e.*, they had not forgotten their catechism. From our observations we conclude that, in the city missions of to-day, belief in the divinity of Christ and in the atonement—not to speak of other doctrines—wield a very scanty influence, and is generally absent until after conversion, at which time the new Christian is generally instructed in the popular theology. I pressed G. with questions touching the religious beliefs that occupied his attention in any degree whatsoever during the night of his conversion and the preceding days, but could obtain nothing more than what is recorded. Although at the time of our interview he was well informed as to "Salvation by the blood of Christ," "Salvation by faith," and the atonement doctrine, the name of Christ

<sup>1</sup> "As regards the means used in this Revival (in Rochester), I would say that the doctrines preached were those that I always preached everywhere. The moral government of God was made prominent; and the necessity of an unqualified and universal acceptance of God's will as a rule of life; the acceptance by faith of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, and in all His official relations and work; and the sanctification of the soul through or by truth."—From "Finney's Memoir."

appeared neither in the history of his life freely given, nor in answer to my questions. At the time the only things real to him were his misery, his complete helplessness, and a dubious hope that some mighty power called God might be willing and able to save him. The story of S. H. Hadley presents a similar mental state, as also the case of O., who did not so much as mention Christ when relating his experience, and who stated that doctrines played no part in it, with the exception of the concept of God as a power, able and willing, perhaps, to succor him. Similar remarks can be made with reference to the great majority of that class of converts. The following quotation from Col. H. H. Hadley, well known in home-mission circles, the instrument of the reform of hundreds of drunkards, may interest the reader, if only by its picturesque-ness: "Men have been converted in the delirium tremens. It knocks all the theology higher than a kite! I don't understand it, but it is so. Take my own case,—a big, bloated drunkard, had fifty-three drinks the day before I was converted, most of them brandy cocktails, and before me I saw my Lord crucified; I was converted."<sup>1</sup> I heard myself in a New York City Mission men tell that they had been converted while intoxicated, even to a considerable degree. I found satisfactory evidence that their story was correct, and that their conversion, judged by the newness of their life, was genuine. Subsequently similar facts came repeatedly to my knowledge.

As a last illustration of the rôle of intellectual beliefs in conversion, we report the harrowing experience of the famous temperance orator, John B. Gough, who, for twenty-six years, gave continuous proof of his moral regeneration (see appendix). Not the slightest comfort or help did he derive from the idea of God's goodness and readiness to help him. It is practically the conversion of an atheist: neither God nor Jesus Christ is mentioned. The sense of his degradation and worthlessness does not involve in his mind responsibility for sin to others; he is absorbed in his own self. He battles against himself, poor slave and outlaw, to conquer, if possible, the place he has lost in society. When the stranger spoke to him on a public street in Worcester, kindness, sympathy, the proof that all bonds between him and mankind were not cut off, and that men still had confidence in his manhood, lighted up the redeeming flame of Faith. "It was the first touch of kindness which I had known for months; and simple and trifling as the circumstances may appear to many, it went

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<sup>1</sup> From a talk in Boston, reported by the *Boston Herald*, Feb. 6, 1895.

right to my heart, and like the wing of the angel, troubled the waters in that stagnant pool of affection." On the urgent request of the stranger, he resolves to sign again the abstinence pledge. "I said to myself: If it should be the last act of my life, I will perform my promise, and sign it, even though I die in the attempt, for that man has placed confidence in me, and on that account I love him." This time the Saviour was not Jesus Christ, but an humble restaurant-waiter. Names, persons and representations; a sympathetic fellow-man, Jesus Christ, or God, are practically one, in so far as they are able to determine the birth of the same life of love, of which the name, viewed from a slightly different position, reads "*Faith.*" What imports is that the regenerating psychic process takes place; through what instrument, it matters little. As I remarked to a gentleman who was collecting data for me that the cases of conversion he had sent me showed a startling lack of discrimination between Christ and God, he answered, "To them God and Christ are one." Yes, indeed, and both owe their reality to *our* love and *our* need of love. They might be compared in this respect, without irreverence, to Dante's Beatrice, whose reality sprung from the poet's heart.

The case of *G.* falls in with that of Gough. The loving sympathy of a woman became in him the leaven of the new life.

We add some quotations picturing the affective condition of the "faithful." They come from individuals who had wandered far away from conventional righteousness. *R.* experienced a great peace of soul, a great quietude. Care for the future and remorse for the past disappeared. Love and thankfulness took their place. *S.* felt that "God guided him in all things; that He cared for everything which concerned him and relied confidently on Him, although during that period he was very poor, miserable, without proper clothing, and suffering from hunger." *H.:* "Since that moment joy has not failed him. He felt God in his heart, had the assurance that he was renewed by the Spirit of God. He was happy, even though at the time he had no shelter in which to spend the night. He had confidence that God would never forsake him." *T.:* "At the time of his conversion he felt that God was a Father, that He would care for him as for one of His children." The individual, until then isolated, separated from the world, finds himself at one with God. Adam, banished on account of sin, is readmitted to the presence of the Lord in the garden of Eden; a bond of love and confidence unites him to all creation. *A. Fassler's* autobiography, "*Un Relèvement,*" is an

interesting illustration of the passage from the isolation of "selfness" and the accompanying practical and theoretical immorality to the sympathetic attitude and the new life it involves. How beautifully the life of St. Francis of Assisi expresses this oneness with nature, which none but the soul undivided by sin can enjoy. Meek Francis found in life the peace and unity which Christian and Buddhist ascetics sought in death. The deluded disciple of Buddha grows stolid and inane in the pursuit of Nirvana, while St. Francis' heart thrills at the sight of the very earth-worms; the trees of the forest, the star in distant heavens, the bird on the bough, every creature, dumb or speaking, moving or inanimate, is his brother or sister: "Praised be my Lord for Sister Moon and for the stars, which thou hast created in the heavens, clear and beautiful. Praised be my Lord for Brother Wind, for the air and the clouds, for the pure sky and for all time, which give life and sustenance to Thy creatures. . . . Happy they who shall be found conformed to Thy holy will, for the second death can do them no hurt." What most distinguishes Jesus Christ from other men is a more perfect sense of moral unity. He revealed the Fatherhood of God because he felt himself indeed the Beloved Son from whom the Father has no secret.

When the sense of estrangement, fencing man about in a narrowly limited ego, breaks down, the individual finds himself "at one with all creation." This extension of the ego is worth more careful attention than we can give it here. When the egoistic will yields, personality does not become more sharply defined, but less so; more diffuse, it tends to lose itself in the general life, or general will. It is that which is strictly personal which gives to self its roughest sensations; the saint is hardly conscious that he is a distinct being, isolated from the world; he lives in the universal life; he and man, he and nature, he and God, are one. We find here again the *raison d'être* of this universal craving to yield one's self, to give up, to re-enter Nature's womb and live of its life. That state of confidence, trust, union with all things, following upon the achievement of moral unity, which we have found, more or less tersely expressed, in every conversion considered is the *Faith-state*.

The preceding pages have made apparent, we hope, the accessariness of doctrinal beliefs in regeneration. The first part of the conversion-process ending in absolute self-surrender, needs have no dogmatic forerunners or accompaniments; the sense of sin and its natural feeling-consequences are all that must exist. From it flows out every experience of the "way down:" wretchedness, feeling of isolation, conviction of ina-

bility to realize the unity of purpose longed for and finally even despair. With the disappearance of every known sinful desire, a psychic revolution, harmonizing the motor tendencies, takes place and brings peace and joy. Neither is there any place for the necessity of doctrinal beliefs in this "positive phase." The only point at which doctrinal beliefs might condition the process is, then, the turning point; before and after the conversion-process all is determined by physiological laws, just as the round of feelings through which we pass during a bodily disturbance. We shall come back later on to this turning point.

We have seen also that various dogmatic beliefs supposed by Christian theology to be necessary to Salvation, suddenly, on the advent of the faith-state, acquire a character of certainty specifically distinct from the one they enjoyed previously. These dogmas, we have noticed, were in some cases believed in before conversion; in others, they were disbelieved or ignored. Whichever of them happened to be held on satisfactory rational grounds, or suggested to the mind by the experience undergone at conversion, as, for instance, in Mrs. Emerson's case, or yet any religious belief accepted on the authority of tradition as essential to conversion, assumed during the regenerating crisis a new reality, and became an object of Faith. In this new state, discussion is no more possible, because, inasmuch as the ground of assurance is not rational, argumentation is irrelevant. The seminary student expresses this with pleasing ingenuousness: "Strange to say, the arguments seemed not to enter into my thinking. There were no appropriate faculty and capacity for them in me. They stood apart from me. I could take the logical standpoint and could see that they were quite convincing, and yet my inward peace of belief was in no way disturbed." "Conviction" is, we see, a derived product, a mere casual off-shoot of the faith-state, having in itself no necessary worth. It is consequently a gross error to imagine that the chief practical value of the faith-state is its power to stamp with the seal of reality certain theological conceptions. On the contrary, its value lies solely in the fact that it is the psychic correlate of a biological growth reducing contending desires to one direction; a growth which expresses itself in new affective states and new reactions; in larger, nobler, more Christ-like activities. The strongest pillar of Christian "orthodoxy" rests not on rational arguments, but on such experiences as those we have quoted. The men who have contributed most during the last centuries to keep together the Christian system have derived their assurance and the ardor with which they forced it upon

the world from a conversion-experience. When biblical criticism, when historical and natural science, when psychology threatens the antique structure, it is in the regenerating power wielded by Christianity that the shaken believer finds shelter and rest. *The ground of this specific assurance in religious dogmas is, then, an affective experience.* Finney, for instance, feels a peculiar emotional disturbance, that he likens to a wave of electricity going through and through him; immediately this sensation, seeking for an adequate cause, connects itself with the idea of the Holy Spirit and the related doctrines. His phraseology is worth quoting:

"I instantly seized hold of this with my heart. I had intellectually believed the Bible before, but never had the truth been in my mind that faith was a voluntary trust instead of an intellectual state. I was as conscious as I was of my existence of trusting at that moment in God's veracity." Speaking of Bible promises he says: "They did not seem to fall so much into my intellect as into my heart." St. Paul's conversion did not rest on speculations, but on affective experiences. Luther suddenly finds himself at peace, relieved from the load of sin, which no amount of good works had been able to purge away, and then the scheme of salvation by faith, together with the related doctrines, becomes for him an unshakable reality. Z. did not believe in the divinity of Christ; but when the wonderful transformation came to pass, the divinity of Jesus appeared to him as sure and evident as conversion itself. I., after having under pressure of the voice of conscience confessed to a man the wrong he had done him, declares, "I found a deeper peace and a greater gladness than I ever had before. *It confirmed my faith in the reality of God's Word, Christ's Work, and my own conversion.*" Every conversion could furnish illustrations similar to these. In these cases certain conceptions are associated with an actual affective experience in the relation of cause to effect. The objects of Faith may even be preposterous; the affective stream will float them along and invest them with its unshakable certitude. The more startling the affective experience, the less explicable it seems, the easier it is to make it the carrier of unsubstantiated notions. The unwarranted support given to theological conceptions by the affective life is due to nothing else than to the universal and unavoidable proneness to connecting things as cause and effect for the only reason that they are together, or follow upon each other, in the mind. I fell once into a controversy with a very earnest and good man concerning the atonement as understood by a narrow church. As he was cornered by arguments pointing to the irrationality and immorality of the



doctrine, he suddenly ceased arguing and exclaimed: "It may appear so, but I cannot doubt it; *I have experienced it.*" He had experienced not only a change of heart, but also the transcendent doctrine of the atonement! Many of the most deeply rooted superstitions arise from similar accidental associations between sensations or emotions and ideas.

It is not in the province of this essay to consider in its general aspects the great question of the relation of feeling and sensation to intellect. But since our subject leads us to it, we shall subjoin some facts taken from a different sphere, showing in a striking manner how the feeling of reality belonging to a sensation or to an emotion is transferred to an intellectual concept.

In certain forms of insanity characterized by perturbations in the somatic or specific sensations, explanations of a most irrational sort are entertained and partake in the reality-timbre of the unfamiliar feelings they are meant to account for. A general parietic<sup>1</sup> suffering from heart trouble imagined that some invisible being was pumping wind into him. The loudness of the heart beats and murmurs had given rise to the delusion. More striking is the case of a young girl suffering from mysophobia.<sup>1</sup> She was troubled by an imaginary inability to keep her hands clean; she would be washing them every minute. When questioned about her general condition, she would complain of the uneasiness that her dirty hands gave her. One day some gentlemen attempted to prove to her that she was mistaken. "When did you wash your hands last?"—About two minutes ago.—What have you been doing since then?—Reading the newspaper. (She was holding it in her hands.)—Is your newspaper dirty?—After examination, the answer was, "No."—You have done nothing else since you washed?—No.—Then your hands cannot be dirty! Her hands were examined by the persons present and declared perfectly clean. She gazed at them evidently perplexed, endeavoring in vain to find dirt-spots, and after a short silence, exclaimed impulsively: "*But I feel they are dirty.*" She also, as the seminary student, could take the logical standpoint, and see that the arguments were quite convincing. Against such a ground of belief as hers, intellectual considerations cannot avail. Who does not know by personal experience to what nonsensical ideas a mastering fear will give reality! When the danger is past, we laugh at our absurdity; but if the affective state continues, the belief, however irrational and groundless it may be, remains as an object of faith, *i. e.*, it participates in the sense of reality possessed

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<sup>1</sup>Seen at the Worcester State Lunatic Asylum.

by the affective experience itself. The cold philosopher who ignores the mighty religious affective states, sneers at the superstitious Christian. He cannot understand how men of broad culture and good common sense can give assent to doctrines to him so preposterous. The mystery vanishes when the slavery of the intellect to the affections and sensations is fully realized.

Our theological systems and articles of faith are the body of justifications given to the various affective experiences of religious life, arranged and systematized, more or less conformably to the science and philosophy of the time, according to the degree of scientific spirit and knowledge of those who assumed the labor of codification. If the religious *experiences* of our day are essentially the same as those of the beginning of our era, the conceptual world has changed wondrously. Nevertheless we still keep the precious stone in the old unbecoming setting, for fear, they say, that the stone will crumble to pieces if transferred to a newer mounting, and we continue to assert that the old one is genuine gold, because the genuineness of the stone has been, and is being, repeatedly tested. Meanwhile, very many, and these among the best, are made to care little for the jewel on account of its repulsive setting.

4. JUSTIFICATION. The sudden revulsion of the affective state experienced in conversion is usually interpreted as due to the disappearance of the load of sin; it is taken by the subject as the warrant of his *justification* and of his *salvation*. If the pre-conversion struggle is caused by the strife between desires, some of which are identified with the individual will to live, and some looked upon as not belonging to the ego (the promptings of the Holy Spirit), it is but natural that when the last resistance of the selfish will gives way, when the will to sin (not the impulse) has surrendered, the sense of condemnation should forthwith disappear and make room for a consciousness of pardon, a sense of release.

Narrower daily experiences make this phenomenon one of the best known to every one: it is tension followed by relaxation; indecision culminating in resolution. In the Christian consciousness this phenomenon becomes especially interesting, first on account of its scope—it involves the whole reaction apparatus, the direction of the whole moral life, and affects every future action having a conscious moral bearing; and secondly, on account of the complication, the particular hues it receives from religious beliefs. If the subjective duality is conceived of as due to sin against an external Being, the cessation of the conflict is looked upon as the

result of God's pardon. In a great many cases of conversion we find this subjective experience expressed as God's *forgiveness*, as the application to the soul of Christ's *atoning sacrifice*, and then it becomes the ground of faith in the related doctrines. But in other, no less numerous, cases the experience, in spite of Christian education, does not assume the aspect of a relation between man and God. Many converts, as we have seen in the chapter on the sense of sin, do not use "pardon," "justification," or similar words; they only make mention of the sense of relief and of the joy which they experienced.

Let us see what information our material gives on this point.

Sometimes the obtained unification of consciousness is not immediately recognized as the goal striven for. *M.*, for instance, wrote: "It seemed as if Jesus himself had come into my body, and taken full possession of me. I did not know, though, that I was saved, as we call it now; but I knew God had had mercy upon me." The famous revivalist, Nettleton, relates that "not long after this an unusual calmness pervaded my soul, which I thought little of at first, except that I was freed from my awful convictions, and this sometimes grieved me, fearing that I had lost all conviction [of sinfulness]." But on hearing other Christians relate their experiences, he realized his conversion. Finney: ". . . I found that my mind had become most wonderfully quiet and peaceful. I said to myself, 'What is this? I must have grieved the Holy Ghost entirely away. I have lost all my conviction. . . . Why!' thought I, 'I was never so far from being concerned about my own salvation in my life. . . .'" In his perplexity he goes as far as to question whether or not he has committed the unpardonable sin, and he endeavors to bring back the load of sin. "But take any view of it I would, I could not be anxious at all about my soul and about my spiritual state. The repose of my mind was unspeakably great. I never can describe it in words." The affective state prevented the reviving of the sense of sin. Likewise Hallock, although he had passed through the whole process of regeneration, remained for a while in ignorance of the fact that he had been "born again." He relates in his "Memoirs" more than one case similar to his own. Edwards wrote of the converts of the Northampton Revival: "There is wrought in them a holy repose of soul in God through Christ, and a sweet disposition to fear and love Him, . . . and yet they have no imagination that they are now converted; it does not so much as come into their minds." That the actual experience of "salvation" should not be immediately identified with the

preconceived representation of it, is not surprising. The after-conversion state cannot be known in the pre-regeneration stage; the fancies nourished by the imagination concerning the condition of the "saved one," may help to mystify the subject when the experience is actually upon him.

But the greater number of converts realize immediately that the gates of the kingdom of heaven at which they have been knocking, have opened, and that now God pardons and receives them. Livingstone testifies that he had joy and peace in believing: "I was conscious that I had received the divine Redeemer in all His offices, as offered to sinners in His Word; that I had devoted myself, for time and eternity, to Him, and was no longer my own; and that I had actually become united to Him. I have never doubted of this transaction, through all the trials of faith, to this day." We might have quoted these lines as illustration of the carrying power of the faith-state. John Wesley takes the warming of his heart, and his new affective state generally, as a proof of God's pardon, ". . . and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." *K.*, an ex-saloon and gambling den keeper, expresses himself as follows: "I made a full surrender of everything, and God for Christ's sake set my captive soul free. The chains of hell were snapped and I was a free man in Christ Jesus. Hallelujah! . . . My pen fails to describe the joy that thrilled my soul as I received the witness of my sins forgiven. . . ."

5. JOY. If the affliction of the person under "conviction" is often painted in the blackest hue, the joy that accompanies the advent of the faith-state frequently appears to be beyond description. Mrs. Emerson says, ". . . my heart seemed to overflow with sweet, adoring ecstasy." It is never altogether wanting and is almost always violent during the first hours or days that follow; afterwards it subsides gradually, and becomes a steady peace and satisfaction. . . . "Nothing but perfect love filled my heart to overflowing."—*K.* "I wept aloud with joy and love. . . . I was so filled with love that I could not sleep."—Finney. "At the close of this awful scene which struck horror through the whole family, she suddenly burst out in raptures of joy and praise."—From Nettleton. "For two or three weeks it seemed to me that I would never know again that sin was in the world. I was filled with joy; everything was bright and good."—*P.* "And in an instant there rose up in me such a sense of God's taking care of those who put their trust in him that for an hour all the world was crystalline, the heavens were lucid, and I

sprang to my feet and began to cry and laugh. . . .” —Henry Ward Beecher. “But oh! with what joy, joy unspeakable, even joy that was full of and big with glory, was my soul filled, when the weight of sin went off, . . . . an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God and a full assurance of faith broke in upon my disconsolate soul!”—Whitefield. “Thereupon I felt as if born again, and it seemed to me as though heavens’ gates stood full open before me, and that I was joyfully entering therein.”—Life of Luther, by Michelet. “In my anguish I cried with an helpless despairing heart to Christ, and as quick as a flash of lightning, a joy so great rushed upon me into my heart that I knew the witness to pardon had come. My tears of sorrow changed to joy, and I lay there praising God in such ecstasy of joy as only the soul who experiences it can realize.”—*U*. “Indeed I cannot tell you whether I was ‘in the body or out of the body,’ but, O! the light came; it was too much for me. I cannot express how I felt. It was as if I had been in a dark dungeon and lifted into the light of the sun. I shouted and I sang praise unto Him who loved me and washed me from my sins. I was forced to retire into a secret place, for the tears did flow, and I did not wish my shopmates to see me, and yet I could not keep it a secret.”—*A*. “I felt very unhappy for a day or two, then light was given me. I saw what Jesus had done and could do, and all at once I became so unreasonably happy, though I could not then tell why.”—*V*. Note how the physiological state of *E*. gave him happiness, in spite of the belief that he was lost. He was supremely happy, and yet he knew that he was undone and that God could not help him, although He loved him. “All the time I was supremely happy; I felt like a little child before his father: I had done wrong, but my Father did not scold me, but loved me most wondrously. Still my doom was sealed. I was lost to a certainty. . . .” We have here thought in contradiction with a feeling-reality. Theology did not square with experience, yet its traditional power was enough to keep it standing. A similar contradiction is found in Finney’s conversion.

This ecstatic condition gives to the convert the illusion that he perceives unutterable, divine truths; that the mysteries of life have become lucid. Contradictions are swallowed in the emotional flood, and the most preposterous theories may assume the value of absolute truth. Sleep and hypnotism give us abundant illustrations of the glory and perfection which we can see in ideas that are ludicrously silly when waking life puts them in connection with related association systems. The astounding credulity of the illuminated, of the

mystic, of the convert, finds a satisfactory explanation in the simplification of intellectual life, in the reduction of associations to certain lines, as it happens when emotion concentrates attention, or in peculiar physiological states, in normal and hypnotic sleep, for instance. In these particular circumstances the ideas present in the mind are put into relation, but with few others; analysis, discrimination, comparison, are roughly performed, and thus few or no contradicting ideas are called up. Hence, whatever is in the mind has a good chance of not being negated. The weakening of the sense of the ludicrous and of the critical power in sleep is due to a similar limitation of our mental activity. These considerations apply to every emotion, and account for their accidental antagonism to reason.

6. APPEARANCE OF NEWNESS. A curious phenomenon is frequently met with at this stage of the conversion-crisis. An *appearance of newness* beautifies every object; it is as if the state of internal harmony was projected outwardly. Jonathan Edwards describes as follows his own experience: "The appearance of all things was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, beautiful appearance of divine glory in almost everything: God's excellency, His wisdom, His purity and love seemed to appear in everything: in the sun, moon and stars; in the clouds and blue sky; in the grass, flowers and trees; in the water and all nature, which used greatly to fix my mind." Mrs. Emerson had already been struck with the joyful appearance of the faces in the meeting in which she was converted. The following day she repaired to school: "Here the alteration appeared more evident than in my own heart. Every countenance appeared inexpressibly beautiful. . . . I inquired with myself whether this happy, delightful place could be the same in which I had lately passed so many dark, dreary hours of despair and horror." A few more illustrations will not be useless: "When I arose the storm had ceased and the sun was shining. I was in a new world! Such beauty and glory in nature I never saw before! . . ."—The Rev. Mr. Peck. "But I have a fresh recollection that when I went in the morning . . . into the field to work, the glory of God appeared in all His visible creation. I well remember we reaped oats, and how every straw and head of the oats seemed, as it were, arrayed in a kind of rainbow glory, or to glow, if I may so express it, in the glory of God."—The Rev. Mr. Hallock. "Immediately after conversion I felt somewhat like a stranger in a strange country; everything seemed new to me."—*F*. "I felt and knew I was a different man. It seemed as if the birds sang

sweeter, the sky bluer. Everything about me praised God, and a sweet sense of His presence was with me." Some speak of "a divine countenance," of "the glory of God."—*N.* This sense of freshness and of beauty is frequently observed after strong emotional disturbances, and also in certain diseases which come to a sudden turning-point. The youth who has sung for the first time his love-tale to his lady and receives the assurance of requited love, the afflicted one who has walked through a dark passage and suddenly comes to the light, may be filled with a sense of newness which he cannot help "seeing" and "hearing."

We might rest content with the explanation that we have to do with an emotional delusion in which the affective state colors external sense-impressions. Beecher was but partly carried away by his subjective state; and consequently the perception of external reality jarred upon his inner felicity: "I shall never forget the feelings with which I walked forth that May morning. . . . The singing of the birds in the woods—for I roamed in the woods—was cacophonious to the sweet music of my thoughts; and there were no forms in the universe which seemed to me graceful enough to represent the Being, a conception of whose character had just dawned upon my mind. . . ." But we can perhaps make another suggestion, in this wise: The conversion crisis may be supposed to have for physiological counterpart a redistribution of energy involving general modification of the association paths; or an alteration of rhythms, changing the nervous regimen. It is natural enough to admit that to a psychic turmoil so intense as that of conversion corresponds a no less considerable physiological commotion settling in a new arrangement of the motor mechanism.

The sense of newness often continues for a considerable time after the recovery of peace.

7. THE RÔLE OF THE WILL. Instead of gathering now the information to be found in the records of conversion on the rôle of the will in regeneration, we shall pass to the second part of our essay and introduce in the section on "The Doctrine of the Grace of God, Will and Determinism," what should be properly placed here. This arrangement has the advantage of bringing the statement of the facts nearer to their discussion.

## PART II.

How do Christian doctrines agree with the facts brought out in the preceding psychological analysis of conversion? Are the church dogmas concerning salvation, faith, justification, grace, predestination, in agreement with them? It will not be without psychological interest, still less without practical value, to place face to face theories and realities. The colossal influence which Christian theology has wielded during nineteen centuries, taken together with the actual crumbling down of the doctrinal pillars of Christian Orthodoxy, pointing to a great and not far distant reformation, invest with momentous interest any serious endeavor to restate religious truths on an empirical basis.

We have seen in a preliminary chapter on the Religious Motive that the clearer the religious consciousness, the more exclusively is theology a scheme of salvation; all other matters tend to fall out into the domain of general philosophy. Provided the word "salvation" is properly understood, it is correct to say that Christ concerned himself with nothing else than the salvation of man; and that Christian creeds are but a metaphysics of the ways and means of regeneration.

One of the mysteries of the world to the looker-on who ignores, either from lack of personal experience or from lack of observation, the specific renovating power of Religion—and these blind lookers-on constitute a large part of civilized society—is the inconceivable amount of energy apparently wasted by humanity in theological discussions. But the meanest religious wrangle assumes an august aspect to the eyes of him who sees in the dispute bearings on man's eternal salvation. Much rather is there a mystery in the deadly earnestness of mankind in search of a new-birth: it is the mystery of evolutionary forces driving humanity to goals it understands not. The lucubration of man's brains may be fantastic—the mind is a wind-mill that may grind trash, but it never turns without wind. Salvation (new-birth) is known as a need, and it is known as an experience. Its reality, looked upon from the point of view of evolution, is a redistribution of energies made necessary by the introduction of new functions; it is a specific transformation similar perhaps to the variations constituting a new species in the animal world.

Since the facts of salvation are the only objects of a practical theology (the etymological meaning of the word matters little), let us, at least cursorily, pass in review and compare with the results of our analysis some of the core-doctrines of the Christian church.



1. THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION. The Protestant creeds agree in defining justification as the judicial act of God by which He pardons all the sins of the sinner in virtue of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Justification does not make man inherently righteous, it is a simple *imputation* of the righteousness of Christ, by which man is *accounted* righteous. The penalty incurred has been paid by Christ, therefore man is justified. It is an external judicial act absolutely independent of man's merits. The Gallican profession of faith says for instance: "*Car les uns ne sont point meilleurs que les autres jusqu' à ce que Dieu les discerne, selon son conseil immuable qu'il a déterminé en Jesus Christ devant la création du monde.*" And the Thirty-nine Articles of the church of England declare that, "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works and deservings." The other Protestant creeds are on this point in perfect agreement with each other and stand in opposition to the Roman church, which holds that justification is not a mere forensic act, that it is not only *imputed*, but also *communicated* through grace. Justification, according to that church, is at the same time remission of sin and the infusion of righteousness. The consequences attributed to justification by Protestant theologians are peace, reconciliation with God, the restoration of intercourse between Him and the sinner, and a title to eternal life.

Thereupon we remark that converts *feel* justified or pardoned—for, although theologically these two terms have a different connotation, experientially they are one,—as the doctrine affirms, not after the performance of good works, but after a crisis in which they appear to themselves to be passive. St. Augustine cries out: "And thou, O Lord, how long? how long?" Not that they desire not, but that their will is not effective. They have the consciousness that not they, but God's grace performed the transformation. Hence that which brings the sense of justification is neither their merit, since it is when they see themselves in the darkest colors, without any goodness or any hope in their own strength, that the sense of pardon comes; neither their good works, since the crisis is completely independent of any outward activity. Thus far the Protestant doctrine corresponds to experience.

The statement that the sinner is "accepted as just, though not just," expresses perfectly the state of consciousness of the convert. He cannot feel condemned now that the will to sin is destroyed, and yet he is conscious of not having attained to perfect holy living. In considering peace and the feeling of reconciliation with God as consequences of the act of jus-

tification, theology reverses the psychological process : for, as we have seen, man believes himself pardoned and justified, *because* he finds himself released from the oppression of sin. It will be objected by some that because the convert knows that he is pardoned upon the recovery of peace only, just as the prisoner infers his acquittal from being set at liberty, it does not follow that the judicial act of justification has not preceded the discharge of the prisoner. It is clearly out of such an anthropomorphic conception that the Christian doctrines have evolved. Until the conception changes, this part of the doctrine will remain in its present form. The Roman doctrine looking upon justification as the covering of sin through an infusion of divine grace, is nearer to the facts. It identifies in some measure justification with regeneration.

The Reformers, and particularly Luther, laid great stress on the *assurance* of salvation. Similarly a large part of the Christian church of to-day expects and requires of every one an *experience of salvation*.

In the primitive church the reception of the Holy Ghost seemed to have been a necessary accompaniment of conversion; what that meant exactly may not be clear, but it was very likely affective manifestations of the faith-state, of like nature with those we have met in the preceding analysis. (See Finney's Conversion, Appendix and pp. 324 and 330.) The particular forms in which affective states dress themselves, are functions of the intellectual atmosphere of the time.<sup>1</sup>

The custom of Spiritualist mediums of speaking in a particular jargon, the same in the same country and at the same period, is also in point here.

**2. THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH.** Justification is conditioned on the side of man by *faith*. That "we are justified by faith alone, without any manner of virtue or goodness of our own," is the common statement of all the Protestant creeds.

The Pauline doctrine partially lost sight of after the first

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<sup>1</sup> The influence of the "milieu" on our mental forms is strikingly illustrated in insanity. The ordinary correspondent in mental disorders, is some one of the personages, or powers, which occupy popular attention. Up to the modern era it was the devil, incubus, angels. Epileptics were demoniacs; hysteric women held converse with evil spirits or entered into mystical union with Christ. All that is past in our advanced communities: electricity and magnetism, oddly enough, have dispossessed the satanic family of a field so well suited to their mischief-making propensities. Go to certain insane asylums to-day and you will hear women and men tell you of "electrical" possession and impregnation, of being troubled by magnetic currents constantly passing through the room, etc.; but you may not hear a single word about the doings of the devil.

centuries of our era, was reaffirmed by the Reformers as the cardinal principle of Christian life, and since then the numberless Protestant denominations rally around the motto, "Salvation by Faith." Even the Unitarians subscribe to this affirmation (see pp. 319-320). It is the central doctrine of modern Christianity, the only one which continues to prosper while the others decline.

If there is agreement concerning the necessity of an experience or state called faith, there is a remarkable diversity of opinion as to the meaning of the word faith. Psychological analysis is sorely needed here. Some definitions of faith do not cover at all the same ground, some overlap partially, very few coincide. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Anselm includes the will: "The mere idea does not make faith, although this cannot exist without an object; in order to true faith the right tendency of the will must be added, which grace imparts." Some make it synonymous with intellectual assent, as Thomas Aquinas, who said: "Faith is an act of the intellect assenting to divine truth, in virtue of the operation of the Spirit of God upon the will. Hodge in his "Systematic Theology," Vol. III, page 60, defines faith as "a conviction of truth founded on testimony," and quotes Hase: "*Unmittelbar Führwahrnehmen, ohne Vermittlung eines Schlussbeweises durch Neigung und Bedürfniss.*" J. E. Edman neglects the mental assent and makes it an affective fact, "*Bewusstsein der Versöhnung mit Gott.*" These two elements are frequently united, for instance in the Heidelberg catechism. Its answer to the question, "What is faith?" is: "It is not merely a certain knowledge whereby I receive as true all that God has revealed to us in His Word, but also a cordial trust which the Holy Ghost works in me by the gospel." The creed of the Reformed Episcopal Church of America declares that "the faith which brings justification is simply the reliance or dependence on Christ which accepts him as the sacrifice for his sins, and as our righteousness." The Roman Catholic church distinguished at the Council of Trent between a *dead faith*, which is simply acceptance of what God has revealed, or the church commanded to be believed, and which can exist even in sinners, and a *living faith*, which expresses itself in works of charity. Faith, according to the Roman church, is only the beginning of salvation, the root of all justification. McClintock and Strong's Cyclopædia sums up this dogmatic medley as follows: "Faith, as used in the New Testament, includes three elements, each and all necessary to the full meaning of the word, while one

or another of them may become prominent according to the connection, viz., (1) full intellectual acceptance of the revelation of salvation; (2) adherence to the truth and to the person of Christ thus accepted; (3) absolute and exclusive trust in the redeeming work of Christ for salvation. In no one of the writers of the New Testament is any of these three elements wanting."

These definitions of Faith include two disparate elements: (1) a specific affective state; (2) certain intellectual beliefs. We have given reasons for refusing to designate these two elements by one name and have denominated the first only as Faith; the other we have found to be a non-essential and accidental accompaniment of the faith-state. We have seen in Part I, pp. 337 ff, that deliverance from sin and the joy of salvation invariably followed upon the advent of the faith-state and were independent of the doctrinal beliefs supposed necessary to salvation; and furthermore that the characteristic affective state marking the passage from the "way-down" to the "way-up" need not even have a specific object in the person of Christ. Faith is a state of internal harmony. The disposition to trust and confidence is a natural consequence of it. We saw how the convert projects outwardly his feeling of happiness and newness (§6. Appearance of Newness). The persons whom he connects with his blessed transformation will, in like manner, be the especial subjects of the objectivation of his inner felicity and loveliness. Saving faith *generates* trust in this doctrine or in that person; *it is not trust*.

Now concerning the rôle of faith in the Christian system. The Augsburg Confession, Article IV, says: "Men are justified freely for Christ's sake through faith when they believe that they are received into favor, and their sins are remitted for Christ's sake; this faith doth God impute for righteousness upon Him." We give elsewhere the statement of the Thirty-nine Articles on this point. The Westminster Confession declares that "faith, . . . . resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification." The Methodist Articles embody the experience of John Wesley. In his sermon on justification are these words: "We mean this much, that it [faith] is the only thing without which no one is justified; the only thing that is immediately, indispensably, absolutely requisite in order to pardon. As, on the one hand, though a man should have everything else, without faith yet he cannot be justified; so, on the other, though he be supposed to want everything else, yet if he hath faith he cannot but be justified." Every one of the other Protestant creeds expresses the

same idea in nearly the same words. There is, then, general agreement on this point. But if faith is looked upon as a pre-requisite of justification and salvation, it is not represented as a procuring cause of salvation ; it is but the *instrument*, or the *means of apprehending* grace and remission of sins, as the Augsburg Confession has it. Not only are good works not a ground of justification, faith itself is not ; for it is not of man's production, but an effect of God's grace. Man is saved by the "object of faith," *i. e.*, by the merits of Christ, the Redeemer.

Orthodox Protestant theology is throughout consistent in its three fundamental declarations: (1) that nothing is able to save man except the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, (2) that without faith there is no salvation, (3) that faith is nevertheless only the instrument of salvation, or according to others, merely the means of apprehending it. Furthermore, as there is no true faith possible without salvation, it follows that "faith" is the work of God in man, performed when the merits of Christ are imputed to the sinner. *It can exist but as a consequence of the work of Christ*, a work in itself completely external to man. In order to retain the doctrine of the Atonement, the church *must* see in faith a gift of God ; for otherwise man attains faith of himself, and consequently saves himself, since it is admitted that faith involves union with God. Logically, then, to maintain the Christian scheme it is necessary to affirm that the sovereign will of God, determined by man's will, according to the Pelagians, or by His own lordly pleasure without regard to merits, according to orthodoxy, imputes to man Christ's righteousness ; and that faith is granted thereupon, or therewith. In that way a necessary concession is made to reality without prejudice to the Atonement : experience and metaphysical speculations are made to walk hand in hand.

It is sufficient for its condemnation that the doctrine be stated. Here again theology has been led astray by a crass anthropomorphism, assimilating God to a Judge.

The analysis of conversion shows that the faith-state, like any other psychic state, follows upon other processes of a like nature. Unless we give up continuity and with it all possibility of the world being a rational moral order, we must conceive of faith as supervening upon specific and always identical psychic phenomena. The supposition that a particular portion — if we may use that term — of our psychic life is severed from subjective causal antecedents of a like nature with itself, and is brought about by an act of God following upon a decision determined by Christ's sacrifice — the subject's knowledge or ignorance of it does not affect the ques-

tion, — belongs to the mythology of a by-gone age. We have seen in previous chapters what are the forerunning links of the process; the facts make plain that salvation (deliverance from moral duality and sin) is a concomitant of faith, and that faith necessarily follows upon the sin-pain and self-surrender, according to a law of continuity of the same nature as the one determining the succession of our thoughts and feelings. There is no more reason for positing a superhuman interposition in the succession of the phenomena of conversion (sin-pain, self-surrender, unity, joy, disappearance or weakening of certain impulses and desires) than in the more ordinary changes — be they sudden or gradual — of our affective life, as in the cessation of “moral,” “mental,” or “physical” pain. The alterations of personality, recently investigated, are no less wonderful than the conversion-experiences.

The compelling power of experience tends to let the mythical side of the doctrine fall into oblivion. Even men considered as firmly orthodox drift unconsciously into the new view. On every side we hear that neither intellectual reception of the truths of Christianity, nor baptism, nor church membership, nor participation in the Lord's supper, nor good works will secure salvation, but only faith in Jesus Christ. In a prospectus of the four Bible schools founded by the evangelist, D. L. Moody, we find the following passage; it would most probably receive the endorsement of the Protestant churches in general:

Some may query what in the view of these schools constitutes a Christian. And this is easily answered without the use of a single theological term. Becoming a Christian is on our part simply a transfer of personal allegiance. When, for instance, a girl in Northfield Seminary is said to become a Christian, it is not meant that . . . . . she has been brought to subscribe her assent to the articles of the creed, however true the creed may be. But it is meant that she has freely given her personal confidence to the most trustworthy Being who ever appeared among men. . . . His Spirit makes upon her spirit a wholly new impression of the divine character, and this begins a radical change in her own, a change that grows marked directly in proportion to the intimacy of the relation maintained by the disciple with the Master.

It would be easy to cite pages upon pages from the literature of aggressive Christian denominations showing that, in spite of orthodoxy, a large part of the church is practically unmindful of the atonement transaction, and considers faith as the *natural and necessary* consequence of well-known subjective antecedents.

On the vital point of the doctrine the church and the facts are in full agreement: *both declare that without faith*

*there is no possible regeneration.* We should like to draw the attention of the reader to a weighty consequence of this principle. The conviction that between the morally righteous man and the true disciple of Christ there is a specific difference, is to-day deeper than ever. Many will remember the sense of wounded pride, of irritated mortification at being made to understand by some plain, empty-headed fellow that, despite their good desires and worthy conduct, they needed conversion ; that the kingdom of heaven did not belong to such as they ; that between him and them there was the gulf separating the saved from the lost. Such talk smacks of arrogance and conceit. Yet the man may have been right ; at any rate he was making a distinction which psychology as well as theology recognizes, *i. e.*, that faith (the particular affective state we have met with in conversion) creates a specific difference between men. Jesus Christ was fully conscious of this differentia when He told good Nicodemus that he must be born again. St. Paul affirmed the same truth when he wrote, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—II Cor.v: 17. We discern the same consciousness in Gautama, and in the saintly figures which stand out luminously in the history of the Christian church. We may scorn the Salvation Army girl who testifies to the same internal life, and asks us whether we are saved ; but we cannot make light, in a matter of experience of this sort, of the unanimous declaration of men to whom we are compelled to ascribe exquisite delicacy of moral and religious feeling. Roman Catholics, Calvinists, Unitarians,—all proclaim the same doctrine. As specimens of Christian opinion, we quote the following from two sources very different, if the intellectual status of the authors be considered :

The sum of our doctrine, then, on this vitally important subject is this: Regeneration, in its internal nature and process, includes three things: First, the receiving the divine life into our inmost being through those capacities that open inward towards God and the spirit-world,—the divine life imparted by the Holy Spirit that ever breathes through the heart of humanity. Secondly, moved by this divine and attractive force, our natural powers, intellectual, affectional and active, incline towards God, and are drawn into His service. Thirdly, all corrupt instincts, whether we acquired them ourselves or received them as the foul inheritance of the past, constituting the Adam of consciousness, are expelled. This is the old man, which is put off as the new man is unfolded from within.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Regeneration," by Edmund H. Sears, p. 140. Published by American Unitarian Association, 1893.

It [faith] consists in a real change from nature to grace as well as by grace. The term of creation is real: the form introduced in the new creature is as real as the form introduced by creation into any being. . . . The first principle of the new creature is faith. . . . It is not if any man change his opinion from gentilism to Christianity, he is a new creature; but if any man be in Christ by a vital participation from union with Him. . . . It [morality] removes not the body of death. It is a cutting away the outward luxuriences, not the inward root. It removes the stench and putrefaction, not the death; an embalmed carcass is as much dead as a putrefied one, though not so loathsome. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Christian life differs from moral life in some such way as love differs from affection and friendship.

The inner condition of the "New Man" is thoroughly different from that of the self-righteous man: the tendency making for ordinary morality, *i. e.*, the affirmation of the individual will in an effort to live righteously, is in direct opposition to the faith-state. It is, as we have seen, when self-surrender is complete, when the will to satisfy the law has seen its impotency and laid down its arms, that the new creature comes to birth. No better illustration of this specific difference exists, to our knowledge, than the case of John Wesley, recorded above, pp. 339 and 340. He acknowledged between his state of moral righteousness, in which he exclaims: "If it be said that I have faith (for many such things have I heard, from many miserable comforters), I answer, so have the devils—a sort of faith; but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. . . . I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his epistle to the Romans: that faith which enables everyone that hath it to cry out, 'I live not, but Christ liveth in me'" (Wesley's Journal)—and his after-conversion condition, a radical difference, *faith*, the Christian differentia.

A. expresses a similar experience: "I attended Sunday school from a child up until I was twenty years of age. . . . At twenty-one I became a member of the R. P. Church. I might say with Paul, I was 'a Pharisee of the Pharisees.' Hitherto I had lived a consistent and, to all appearances, an unblamable life, nevertheless I was conscious of wrong within. . . . I felt the need of the 'one thing needful,' " etc. (Appendix). The facts justify the church in its claim that the true Christian possesses a life in which the merely moral man has no share. There is a biological reality behind the belief that a special relation binds him to the Creator; when he calls himself "saved," "elect," "partaker in

<sup>1</sup> From the writings of the Rev. Stephen Charnock, D. D. (a non-Conformist divine of the middle of the 18th century). Published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1840.



the divine promises," "beneficiary of the covenant of grace," "a new creature," etc., he expresses in various symbolic forms his specific subjective state. We cannot suppose that church members are all Christians in this specific sense; a large proportion of them, it seems, never rise to the faith-state. Their meaningless assent to the creed and their love of virtue are their only title to church membership. They belong to the great mass of outsiders; for, just as many men live affectionately and respectably with a wife without loving her, so most men live useful and correct lives outside the realm of faith.

All this said, and possibly agreed upon, what is the practical value of faith? There are those who look upon love as a morbid phenomenon, and want to see it replaced by simple affection. Is faith worthy of the panegyrics lavished upon it? Is it indeed a higher life, a divine life; or is it but a freak of nature, a phenomenon bordering on insanity, which, instead of being sought after, should be suppressed? The facts of regeneration give, it seems to us, an imperative answer to this query.

### 3. WILL, DETERMINISM AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

What is the rôle played by the will in conversion?

We shall conform in this section to the prevalent opinion and use the word "Will" to designate a supposed or real self-determined power of choice, independent of, and of a different nature from, desires; having in itself the ability, by some not understood means, to cause a stronger desire to be overcome by a weaker one, and thus to save our actions from mechanical necessity.

However paradoxical it may appear to one familiar with the indignant outcry raised by the church against scientific determinism, modern empirical science cannot claim for itself the discovery of the illusory nature of free-will; that honor—if it is one—must be left to the Christian church, unless Buddhism should claim it. Long before science had reached determinism, experience had led the church to formulate as a fundamental principle of the psychology of the scheme of salvation the utter impotency of the will. To the question, what can men do to obtain salvation? the Christian church has but one consistent answer: Nothing; it is the fruit of the Grace of God, which worketh according to its own good pleasure. Although the doctrine affirms that of our own will we cannot believe, that faith is a gift of God, not given according to merit or desire, in practice — and this is but one of the many inconsistencies into which we are forced

when we pass from theory to life—the ministers of the church repeat the words, “Whosoever will may come,” and urge men to “believe.”

Calvin, following St. Augustine, declares in the Gallican Profession of Faith: “*Et bien qu'il y ait une volonté par laquelle il est incité à faire ceci ou cela, toutefois elle est du tout captive sous péché, en sorte qu'il n'a nulle liberté à bien, que celle que Dieu lui donne.*” Furthermore the divine grace is given irrespective of merit: “*Car les uns ne sont point meilleurs que les autres, jusqu'à ce que Dieu les discerne selon son conseil immuable qu'il a déterminé en Jésus Christ devant la création du monde.*” The Augsburg and the Helvetic confessions affirm the same two points: Inability of the will to acquire faith and the good pleasure of God as the only determining cause of the application of His Grace. The *Confession de Foi des Eglises Réformées wallonnes et flamandes*, and the Scotch confession do but repeat the Gallican Articles on Free-will and Election with less emphasis. The former says, “*Par quoi nous rejetons tout ce qu'on enseigne du franc arbitre de l'homme, parcequ'il n'est que serf de péché et ne peut aucune chose, s'il ne lui est donné du ciel.* . . . .” The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England do not substantially differ from the preceding: “The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God.” “We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith and not for our own deservings.” “Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundation of the world was laid) He hath constantly decreed by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor.” The Westminster Confession is thoroughly Calvinistic. The Methodist Articles and the creed of the Reformed Episcopal Church of America, are identical with the Thirty-nine Articles on the subjects of Free-will and Justification. The great creeds of the Protestant churches deny to man not only the natural possession of the instruments of salvation, but even the power to appropriate them to himself when they are offered.<sup>1</sup>

The determinism they proclaim is *one-sided*, inasmuch as

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<sup>1</sup> It is worthy of note that the greatest thinkers of the church, St. Augustine, Calvin, Edwards, and others, have found these conclusions logically necessary.

man is granted the power to do evil of himself, but not that of efficaciously willing good. A theory so persistently put forth for so many centuries, and still holding the field, must have a deep experiential root. That this doctrine is rarely heard of in modern pulpits does not warrant the inference that a systematically elaborated free-will doctrine has been put in its place; on the contrary, the weight of modern psychology goes to make determinism universal; if it is left in the background, it is because our intensely practical age ignores theories.

The experience on which the one-sided determinism of the church rests is what we have called "self-surrender." We have seen that before the advent of peace and the assurance of salvation, the convert experiences the futility of his own efforts: "self-righteousness" is found to work but greater anxiety and deeper dissatisfaction. Luther in his cell, endangering his life by mortifications in order to conquer the evil that was in him, with no other effect than increased moral wretchedness, is a classical example of the impotency of the will in the work of salvation. It is here, in the sense of sin, in the dissatisfaction caused by moral dualism, that we must seek for the psychological root of penance, maceration and asceticism in general. When the body is looked upon as the cause of the pain of sin, any violence to the flesh that may be supposed to subdue its appetites is counted a step towards heaven.

One of the deepest impressions left by the perusal of the conversions we have seen, is the *passivity* of the subjects. They are lookers-on; they attend as spectators the drama that is being played in their consciousness, just as a patient observes and watches for the development of his disease. But before assuming a quiescent attitude, they pass through a period of self-affirmation, of desperate efforts to bring about the desired salvation, — efforts which are but muscular tensions. When their ineffectiveness is recognized, the failure of the will is acknowledged, and resignation to God's good pleasure takes the place of confidence in self.

This quiescent attitude is striking in many of the cases we have dissected. Hadley wrote, "How I wondered if I would be saved!" I.: "For about three years I maintained a fairly moral condition by constant struggles and self-efforts. . . . There was not then, and I knew it, any real inner life, no spiritual joy, no love to the Master. It was a painful forcing to religious duty, and not a spontaneous following of the Divine Voice." Of a later period he says, "I did try at intervals to stop drink by self-resolutions, promises, pledges, only to fall back weaker and deeper down

than before. . . . At last I abandoned all efforts and let the tide rush as it would, indifferent to everything human or divine. . . . . When I got utterly hopeless, helpless, in the darkest despair. . . . ." then salvation came. He concludes his narration with these words: "He [Jesus] delivers me from self-effort, struggles, unrest and self-condemnation; it is simply a life of growth by constant trust."<sup>1</sup>

*G. and O.* had repeatedly signed abstinence pledges, and had made desperate, but vain, efforts to keep them. It was only when all hope of succeeding by their own strength had gone that redemption came. *J.* found that a series of reformations and relapses "had a very hardening effect." "I saw clearly that I had placed myself where human help could do me no good. I had lost my will-power. . . ." St. Augustine, soul-sick, rolled and turned in his chains "*till they were wholly broken*;" he cried within himself, "*Be it done now, be it done now.*" Deliverance, having refused to obey the summons of the will, falls upon the grieved soul at the time of the intensest realization of helplessness, when relaxation has superseded tension; often the unexpectedness of relief causes the convert to doubt his salvation, although he has already obtained it (see p. 350). Sometimes there is a period of revolt, as in the case of Nettleton, who felt he had done all he could, and thought it unjust of God not to "receive" him. He learned later during his missionary career that 'the Spirit of God moves when and where It wills, and does not come at the call of man.' He relates the following incident, which took place at a revival meeting in a private house: "Very soon Emily returned exclaiming, 'O, I cannot go home, I dare not go. I shall lose my concern. What shall I do?' and threw herself down in a chair, her head on the table in the deepest agony. All at once she became silent, and gently raised her head with a placid countenance, and was heard to say in a mild tone of voice, 'O, I can submit, I can love Christ. How easy it is;

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<sup>1</sup> The process of conversion offers to pedagogy incomparable illustrations of the power of sympathy, of trust, in the relation between teachers and pupils, and, generally, between men. If the cardinal principle of religious life is "*Salvation by Faith*," the fundamental principle of the ministers of education should be "*Growth by Sympathy*." Receptivity and suggestibility are proportional to the degree of trust, of self-surrender, of unconsciousness, to which the pupil is brought. Sympathy does not only make communication from teacher to scholar easier, but, better than that, it draws out, unfolds, liberates, potential life. The teacher who provokes resistance, criticism, disdain or indifference, should be banished from the school room; he can neither teach nor educate.

why did I not do it before!" Colonel Gardiner and *M.* were converted in what appears to be a semi-sleep.

How could theology have affirmed the freedom of the will when it is found to be useless in this all-important matter of salvation? St. Augustine needed no other instruction than a conversion-experience to become the apostle of the "total depravity" and "predestination" doctrines.

Now, in spite of the impotency of his will, man is nevertheless rescued and made to enjoy the peace of pardon and the assurance of having been received into the Fatherly arms of God, and that suddenly, as by a miracle. A second before, a miserable convict dragging his chains after him; now free and filled with unutterable love! How is such a wonderful transformation to be explained? The doctrine of the "Grace of God" given freely without consideration of merits, is the answer of the church to that query; no better answer could have been given at the time of the formulation of the dogma. We may remark, by the way, that the same argument for the intervention of God's power can be made for any one of the bodily disorders, such as neuralgia, etc., in which sudden cessation of pain is of common occurrence.

Christianity is not the only religion preaching the blessedness of a surrendered life. The Stoics (some of them at least) sought salvation in the detachment from the changing fortunes of the outer world; they saw that inner unity was not to be attained by proud self-assertiveness, but by humble submission to the Ruling Powers. The Buddhist philosopher teaches at-one-ment with the world-spirit through the destruction of all carnal desires; he gives up desiring and lapses into passive contemplation. His efforts to fall in with the cosmos and be absorbed in it, correspond to the Christian struggle to let God's will rule in himself. In Schopenhauer's denial of the will to live, we find this self-surrender motive systematized. Buddhists, Christians, Stoics, however they may differ on other points, unite to affirm the necessity for man, in order to obtain his desire,—be it called Nirvana, salvation, happiness or otherwise,—to surrender, give up, renounce. They proclaim unanimously, from experience, the deceptive nature of the will to live. The cause of this universal renunciation—one of the most deeply significant phenomena of moral life—is, it seems to us, not so much the disappointments in the achieved as the disheartening experience of the failures of the will. There comes a time in the evolution of the moral life of every people at which the barrenness of the will-effort (or will-tension) is realized; then self-renunciation is introduced in the national religion as a cardinal principle. The essential difference between the

Buddhist and the Christian is that the latter does not only believe that the carnal man must die, but also that he dies to make room for a new individuality. The first suppresses the stream of life, the other changes its direction.

But why is it that man looks upon the descending current of the stream of life as *his*, while he considers the ascending one as *not his*? Why does he identify himself with the desires to be denied, the evil tendencies; while he ascribes to God the desires to be affirmed? The moral religions and philosophies are expressed from that standpoint. Hence they call for *self-surrender*, *self-renunciation*, *self-annihilation*. Why have they not included in the conception of the "self" both terms of the dualism and given man credit for the good as well as for the bad that is in him? Had they done this, they would have exhorted man, as the Concord Sage, to *self-affirmation* and *self-reliance*. Or, then, adopt the other alternative: deny him the good and the bad and look upon him as the stage on which life's drama is being played, as some of our ego-dissolving psychological schemes do! The explanation of this alienation of the higher motives from the self need not be sought for very far. Long before being acquainted with what we called later altruistic impulses, our consciousness was occupied with selfish motives. Primitive man and the child of civilized races are selfish individuals. To them life is but a pursuit after the satisfaction of egoistic desires, and consequently is known by the affirmation of the selfish will only. Later on altruistic instincts come to birth and introduce tendencies opposed to the feelings and desires which up to that time had made up the whole of our ego. Is it to be wondered at if we do not recognize these new comers as "ours," in the same sense as the primitive egoistic desires are felt to be ours? They come to us we know not whence, unexpected, uncalled for, and stand in antagonism to that which we have always called our ego; furthermore, at first they are hardly felt in themselves, but rather only as inhibitions of customary desires,—they do not show themselves openly, they betray their presence by the suppression of the satisfaction formerly derived from the affirmation of the selfish will to live. That man should have denied naturalization to such an evanescent alien was unavoidable. He cannot help considering himself as passive in the conversion crisis: he *receives* Jesus Christ; he *lets God take possession* of his being, he *yields*, he *surrenders*. Yet the very words "receive," "accept," "surrender," have a positive side; they can just as well be accompanied with that which constitutes effort. As a matter of fact, although, for the reason we have given and in accordance with the prev-

alent theology, the subject looks upon the sinful tendencies as belonging to his ego, he cannot avoid at times calling the upward impulses *his*, and then he expresses himself as *I*: "By every conscious effort of my mind and will, I surrendered myself to the power of Jesus. . . ."

Impulses in two directions, both equally ours, because we feel them both, and equally independent of will-effort, is what analysis brings to light concerning the rôle of the will in conversion.

When regeneration is obtained, the desires of the egoistic will fade or disappear more or less completely, and a set of new impulses, bringing with them new emotions and feelings, occupy the foreground of consciousness. Gradually these new-comers acquire a familiar aspect, a home-tinge that makes the convert speak of them as his *new*, in opposition to his *old ego*.

The church denial of the ability of man to do good of himself means nothing more than the recognition of the inefficaciousness of the will-effort. It is here in agreement with the modern psychologists who see in the sense of effort merely the return sensations of muscle contractions.

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*The third and concluding part of the essay is to be published later. It is chiefly theoretical and speculative, being an attempt to point to the possible physiological correlates of the psychic facts analyzed in Part I. It includes a genetic theory of sin, of moral resistance, of consent, of self-surrender and of the faith-state, and ends with general considerations touching the physiological forces at play in religious life, and especially in conversion, and their bearing on some ethical and philosophical problems.*

I take with pleasure this opportunity of acknowledging the indebtedness under which I stand to President G. Stanley Hall for the continued help, stimulation and inspiration received from him during the three years I have spent as student at Clark University.

I also tender my hearty thanks to Dr. E. C. Sanford for the assistance he always readily granted me and for suggestions concerning this essay, and also to a friend who patiently assisted me in the tedious work of revising my manuscript.

## APPENDIX.

The concrete cases of conversion, which constitute the clearest portion of our observation material, were in part gathered from literature, biographies, memoirs of great revivalists and religious periodicals, and, in part received in answer to the questionnaire printed below,<sup>1</sup> or taken directly, in private interviews, from the mouth of the converts. In the following pages the reader will find a selection of typical and striking cases of sudden regeneration. During our early adolescence, circumstances, and later philosophical interest, have brought us in contact with the phase of life herein examined. We have frequented "revivals," mission meetings, Salvation Army exercises, etc., and thus have gained, in the atmosphere of such assemblies, a practical knowledge of the subject of our thesis, which has been to us an invaluable guiding light.

The questionnaire was sent to persons who were thought to have "experienced religion," to mission leaders and pastors, and through them to a large class which we could not have reached directly. It was moreover published in *The Presbyterian* of Philadelphia, in *The Christian* of London, and in *The Outlook*. It was to be expected that conversion tales would be cut more or less after the classical pattern furnished by such famous conversions as those of St. Augustine, Bunyan, and Wesley. As a matter of fact a small percentage of the answers received were made up of the phraseology current in revivals and mission rooms, and smacked so strongly of religious cant, and so little of personal experience, that they had to be rejected; most of them gave internal evidence of earnest effort to describe accurately an experience to which a momentous significance was assigned.

One is at first astonished at the uniformity of the process described by the subjects of conversion. At a distance of more than a thousand years, among circumstances varying widely as to nationality, temperament, mental endowment, education and age, the main features of the phenomenon remain the same. That such should be the fact is but natural, if conversion is what we believe it to be.

The fruitfulness of our questionnaire was considerably limited by

<sup>1</sup>QUESTIONNAIRE FOR A STUDY OF CONVERSION.

1. How long ago were you converted? At what age?
2. Were you brought up by Christian parents? What religious education did you receive? (Did you go to Sunday school? How long?)
3. Describe your life, your religious condition and your moral struggles for the period preceding conversion. Were you at peace with yourself? Did you endeavor to reform? What did you do to that end? What measure of success attended your efforts?
4. Where, on what occasion and under what circumstances, were you converted? Had you, before that moment, made up your mind that you would be converted if possible? Tell, in detail, what you meant then by conversion: why did you desire it; what did you expect of it? In what mental and in what moral disposition were you at the time? What was the state of your health?
5. Relate your conversion. What were the various thoughts in your mind and the various feelings in your heart at the moment of conversion? What affected you most deeply? Were you very much moved? By what, or by whom were you moved?
6. Describe your feelings and your thoughts immediately after conversion. Were you aware that you had experienced conversion? In what particulars had you become changed? What was temporary and what permanent in the results of your conversion?
7. If you have passed through more than one similar experience, or through other less momentous moral crises, describe each one separately, giving date of each.
8. Do you know of conversions, or of simple reformations, as of drunkards, having happened, without the influence of the Christian religion?



the lack of confidence on the part of certain people in the usefulness of psychology applied to religious phenomena, by the difficulties which a person of average culture and ordinary introspective power would naturally encounter when trying to record his own experience, and also by the antagonism of some church officials, a hostility arising from the belief, still alive in some quarters, that science and religion are enemies, and also from a fastidious delicacy, offended at an invitation to pry into sacred experiences. This seemed to one of our correspondents "worse than vivisection." If we felt the need of defending ourselves against this accusation, we should point to the wonderfully acute searchings of heart of so many devout Christians—St. Augustine for instance—made public for the edification and instruction of the people.

We desire to acknowledge here our indebtedness to Mr. Chas. Cutter, leader of the Fulton Street Noonday Prayer Meeting, New York, for the help given us in the collection of material. It is through him that the questionnaire prepared by us was published in *The Presbyterian* and in *The Christian*. He has communicated to us a great many of the most interesting answers, from which we quote in this essay.

Lack of space prevents us from publishing all the conversion-records we should like. Several of those which follow have been abridged. The name of the person and the place of residence were given in almost every case.

A. [Age fifty, converted at twenty-two, in Glasgow, Scotland.]

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My condition was morally miserable for about a month previous to conversion. I had always been a young man of prayer. I was converted at my work. At that time I was working every alternative week at night (papermaking), and, between 12 and 1 o'clock at night I was praying earnestly to God to save me for the sake of Jesus. Indeed I cannot tell you whether I was "in the body or out of the body," but O! the light came,—it was almost too much for me. I cannot express how I felt. It was as if I had been in a dark dungeon and lifted into the light of the sun. I shouted and I sang praise unto Him who loved me and washed me from my sins. I was forced to retire into a secret place, for the tears did flow, and I did not wish my shopmates to see me, and yet I could not keep it a secret. I was constrained to tell to all around what a gracious Saviour I had found. At the moment of my conversion I was in the best of health. The only thing that troubled me was my soul. The joy and the peace that filled my soul at conversion was greater than I have felt since that period, but, thank God, there is a peace and a joy within my soul now that the friends of this world know nothing of.

B. [Converted at twenty. A clergyman.]

At the age of twenty I entered a theological seminary and remained there four years. The third year I became a member of a conversational club, whose motto was the Hebrew for "We stand united for investigation." During the course of our studies in rationalistic Biblical criticism, a night was devoted to the discussion on the Fourth Gospel, the author of the essay taking ground against the historical validity of this gospel, regarding it as a sort of philosophical writing on certain phases of Christian teaching. I remember the reader's last sentence: "The Fourth Gospel is a

great epic." By this essay the flood-gates of doubt were open me. (See conclusion, p. 339.)

(From a letter communicated to us by Dr. Burnham.)

C. [The Rev. Mr. Ch. G. Finney.]

Up to his conversion he was a young man of very good character. See pp. 324 and 330.

In the evening of the day in which his conversion took place, "his heart seemed to be liquid within him." He wanted to pour his whole soul out to God's and rushed into a back room to pray. "There was no fire and no light in the room; nevertheless it appeared to me as if it were perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. It did not occur to me then, nor did it for some time afterwards, that it was wholly a mental state. On the contrary it seemed to me that I saw Him as I would see any other man. He said nothing, but looked at me in such a manner as to break me right down at His feet. . . . I wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterances." When he returned in the front office: "As I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it. . . . without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person. . . . the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through my body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love. . . . I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me like immense wings." During the night he awoke many times "on account of the great flow of the love of God that was in my heart. I was so filled with love that I could not sleep."

(From Finney's "Memoirs," New York, Barnes & Co., 1876.)

E. [Age forty-two, converted at thirty-three. An Oxford graduate.]

My father was a Church of England clergyman. My mother, still alive, never had, and has not now, a knowledge of salvation. I was intended from babyhood for the ministry, and had a grammar school and university career, graduating in arts at Oxford in 1880. . . .

At fifteen years of age I was a confirmed smoker, and used to get drunk often without the master being aware of it. At eighteen years of age I was sent to another school. . . . My second school was a change for the worse. Here, all the older boys, with one or two exceptions, were habitual drinkers, if not drunkards. Out all night by means of duplicate keys to the school doors, was a regular thing for weeks together, and drink, smoking, and sins of all kinds (except the more horribly gross ones) were the order of the day. We were all manly fellows, and I thank God now that I am spared the humiliation of looking back upon a life tainted by the abominations which prevailed in some of our larger public schools. About two and a half years of this brought me up to the age at which I should enter upon my university career. I went to Oxford and gained my scholarship or exhibition in the usual way. A reckless, drunken and otherwise impure life passed by quickly enough, and I found myself a graduate, ready, as my poor father thought, to take orders at once. Alas, alas! nothing was further from my mind than the ministry. I knew absolutely nothing of God. Up to thirty-three years of age my whole life was one of routine religion. Between the period of leaving Oxford and my conver-

sion, I never darkened the door of my father's church, although I lived with him for eight years, making what money I wanted by journalism, and spending it in high carousal with any one who would sit with me and drink it away. This was a source of much trouble to my parents, who saw my talent and education thrown away, owing to my inability to settle down to steady work. But I had grown weary of religion as I had seen it. Eight years, between my degree at Oxford and my conversion in 1886, seems a long time now to have wasted in a small village with two inns only. But it went by very quickly, in the way I lived. I was young and handsome, of tremendously powerful physique, and was a general favorite with the girls. This, I suppose, was a great factor in enabling me to live a life so different from the one I might have lived, had I turned to and gone earnestly to work. Anyway, so I lived, and would probably have gone on living had not God turned me around and compelled me to go another road. Sometimes drunk for a week together, and then a terrible repentance, and not touch a drop for a whole month. I never got beyond that period, except once, when I joined the Good Templars, in the hope that the restraints of this body would keep me in check. I did very well for nearly three months, but a Good Templar at last broke me, and we both ceased to attend the meetings, and were knocked off the roll. In all this period, that is, up to thirty-three years of age, I never had a desire to reform on religious grounds, but all my pangs were due to some terrible remorse I used to feel after a heavy carousal; the remorse taking the shape of regret after my folly in wasting my life in such a way—a man of superior talents and education. I was not much alarmed about the future world; I did not believe it to exist, at any rate. This "terrible remorse" turned me gray in one night, and whenever it came upon me I was perceptibly grayer the next morning. What I suffered in this way is beyond the expression of words. It was hell-fire in all its most dreadful tortures. Often did I vow that if I got over "this time" I would reform. Alas, in about three days I fully recovered, and was as happy as ever. So it went on for years, but, with a physique like a rhinoceros, I always recovered; as long as I let drink alone, no man was as capable of enjoying life as I was.

I was converted in my own bedroom in my father's rectory house at precisely 3 o'clock in the afternoon of a hot July day (July 13th, 1886). I was in perfect health, having been off from the drink for nearly a month. I was in no way troubled about my soul. In fact, God was not in my thoughts that day. A young lady friend sent me a copy of Professor Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," asking me my opinion of it as a literary work only. Being proud of my critical talents, and wishing to enhance myself in my new friend's esteem, I took the book to my bedroom, for quiet, intending to give it a thorough study, and then write her what I thought of it. It was here that God met me face to face, and I shall never forget the meeting. "He that hath the Son hath Life Eternal;" "He that hath not the Son hath not Life." I had read this scores of times before. But this made all the difference: I was now in God's presence, and my attention was absolutely "soldered" on to this verse, and I was not allowed to proceed with the book till I had fairly considered what these words really meant and what they involved. Only then was I allowed to proceed, feeling all the while that there was another being in my bedroom, though not seen by me. The stillness was very marvelous, and I felt supremely happy. It was most unquestionably shown me, in one second of time, that I had never touched the Eternal, that is,

God; and that if I died then, I must inevitably be lost. I was undone. I knew it as well as I now know I am saved. The Holy Spirit of God showed it me in most ineffable love; there was positively no terror in it; I felt God's love so powerfully upon me that only a mighty sorrow crept over me that I had lost all through my own folly, and what was I to do? What could I do? I did not repent even; God never asked me to repent. All I felt was, "I am undone," and God cannot help it, although He loves me. No fault on the part of the Almighty. All the time I was supremely happy; I felt like a little child before his father. I had done wrong, but my Father did not scold me, but loved me most wondrously. Still, my doom was sealed. I was lost to a certainty, and being naturally of a brave disposition I did not quail under it, but deep sorrow for the past, mixed with regret for what I had lost, took hold upon me, and my soul thrilled within me to think it was all over. Then there crept in upon me so gently, so lovingly, so unmistakably, a way of escape, and what was it after all? The old, old story over again, told in the simplest way, "There is no name under heaven whereby ye can be saved except that of the Lord Jesus Christ." No words were spoken to me; my soul seemed to see my Saviour in the spirit, and from that hour to this, nearly nine years now, there has never been in my life one doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father both worked upon me that afternoon in July, both differently and both in the most perfect love conceivable, and I rejoiced there and then in a conversion so astounding that the whole village heard of it in less than twenty-four hours.

After passing through the scene with God in my bedroom, I went to the rooms downstairs to relate what I had experienced to anyone who would listen. All saw I was a wonderfully changed man, very subdued and quiet, but out of a family of six grown-up sisters, a brother, a father, and a mother,—only one, a widowed sister, two years older than myself, really understood what had taken place, and she was rejoiced beyond measure, and said that I had received a glorious conversion, and that she always knew that I would be saved at last, although it looked so bad against me. But a time of trouble was yet to come. The day after my conversion I went into the hay field to lend a hand with the harvest, and not having made any promise to God to abstain from drink in moderation only, I took too much and came home drunk. My poor sister was heart-broken; and I felt ashamed of myself and got to my bedroom at once, where she followed me, weeping copiously. She said I had been converted and fallen away instantly. But although I was quite full of drink (not muddled, however), I knew that God's work begun in me was not going to be wasted. It was no good to pray in that state,—I had not prayed for twenty years,—and, wishing my sister good night, I said with the utmost simplicity, "You don't know all that has occurred to me; it is all right, and although I am drunk now, I love my Saviour with a love I cannot express to you." And so she left me for the night, somewhat more reconciled. Next morning I was very low indeed; still I felt that God was not going to lift me up like that and then let me fall into lower depths at once. About mid-day I made on my knees the first prayer before God for twenty years. I did not ask to be forgiven; I felt that was no good, for I would be sure to fall again. Well, what did I do? I committed myself to Him in the profoundest belief that my individuality was going to be destroyed, that He would take all from me, and I was willing. In such a surrender lies the secret of a holy life. From that hour drink has had no terrors for me; I never touch it, never want it. The same thing occurred with my pipe:

after being a regular smoker from my twelfth year the desire for it went at once, and has never returned. So with every known sin, the deliverance in each case being permanent and complete. I have had no temptations since conversion, God seemingly having shut out Satan from that course with me, but he gets a free hand in another way, but never on sins of the flesh. Since I gave up to God all ownership in my own life, He has guided me in a thousand ways, and has opened my path for me in a way almost incredible to those who do not enjoy the blessing of a truly surrendered life.

P. S.—Written at one sitting, and not meant for publication as it stands.

[The writer of this letter is now married and has four children.]

F. [Age twenty-one, converted at sixteen. Brought up in a Christian home. Attended the Wesleyan Sunday school from the age of four to fourteen.]

At the age of fourteen I thought that if I went to a place of worship once every Sunday, that would be all the religion I required. "Was I at peace with myself?" Far from it. There were times when I felt most miserable. I felt my moral nature sinking while I was trying hard to find something higher. I endeavored to reform, but my moral surroundings were too strong for me; so my efforts were all unsuccessful.

On the night of February 23d something tempted me to go to the Wesleyan Chapel of my childhood days. Rev. A. Wood was preaching from Luke x: 5-42. The words came home to me. I felt that there was something else needed in my life; the sermon had made me feel miserable. In this state I remained for fifteen hours. For five months previous to this I had felt that I would like to be converted; but the moral forces of my workshop (which was in a piano forte factory) seemed too strong for me. My moral disposition was somewhat crushed by the sense of my sins. My mental condition, like my health, was good. On February 24th between 11 and 12 A. M., I could bear the weight of my sins no longer. I thought if ever I am to be converted, why not now? So locking the door of my workshop, I fell on my knees and prayed in the language of hymn 327 in "Sacred Songs and Solos." And immediately a voice seemed to say to me, "Thy sins which are many, are all forgiven thee." At this moment I was filled with wonder. Arising from my knees I knew that I was converted. I was affected most by my sins and my Saviour's great love, but I do not remember that I shed a tear.

Immediately after conversion I felt somewhat like a stranger in a strange country; everything seemed new to me. Yes, I knew for a certainty that I was born again. My whole life was altered. And I saw everything under a different aspect from what I had done before. As far as I know, everything that was good and true became permanent. . . . .

G. [Age forty, converted twenty months ago. Superintendent of a mission.]

Until the age of twenty-one he lived in a Christian home. He took his first glass of whiskey at that age, and gradually became a drunkard. Three years ago, after the ruin, through dissipation, of his business establishment, he went to Canada, where no one knew his antecedents, with the intention of beginning life anew. But soon he fell a prey to his old enemy. He had signed enough abstinence pledges to "cover the wall of a room;" they were never

kept more than a month, generally only a few days, and sometimes but a few hours, in spite of hard struggles to be true to his promise. In Montreal he lost a very good position (\$70 a fortnight), and was thrown into prison for disorderly conduct. Disgusted and tired of life, he left Canada to go to W. Here he arrived intoxicated. He secured a position, but was soon dismissed for drunkenness, and then found himself once more without money, without friend and without home. Gladly would he have welcomed death. As he was in this wretched situation, a lady showed him sympathy and invited him to a mission. Her kindness made him look within. For years no one had ever cared about him; this unwonted kindly interest went to his heart. At the meeting a pressing invitation was given to all persons present to give themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ with the assurance that He would save them. A bed was given him in the mission house. While his room-mate lay drunk, he sat up, or paced the room all night long in a sullen, despairing mood. Some one had lent him a Bible; he tried to read it, but his thoughts were too disturbing. That which he had heard in the meeting had brought to his mind recollections of youth, the thought of the young wife he had left in England, of his family, etc. He realized that there was no hope, that if he died then he would go to hell. He prayed asking God to take him as he was; saying that if He was willing to save him, he would let Him. "I said, here I am." At about 6 A. M. he felt that God had pardoned him. The anguish of the night had passed, and he found himself calm and peaceful. That very morning he told a companion that he was converted, that he had given his heart to God. Terrible were the temptations that day as he passed before the saloon doors; but he was kept. They recurred day after day for more than a week. The lady's continued sympathy was a great comfort to him.

Three months after his conversion he opened a mission, which progressed rapidly, and is now doing very good work among drunkards and other outcasts.

(Written from detailed notes taken while he was relating his conversion to me.)

*H.* [Age thirty-five, converted five years ago. Hotel waiter. Public school education.]

Until the age of fifteen he lived among religious people. Subsequently he left home, fell into bad company and became a drunkard. He abandons his wife, sleeps in the open air and becomes a tramp. In that condition he feels very unhappy and lonely. He is without friends. He has remorse at the thought of his mother, who grieves for him.

On the 28th of November, 1889, while he was seated in Central Park, N. Y., a young man entered into conversation with him, and invited him to go in his company to a religious meeting. The kindness of the stranger moved him deeply; he did not understand why a well-dressed stranger should care for him and be willing to walk with a raggedly clad fellow like himself. At the meeting he heard the testimonies of those who had also been wretched castaways, and who were now happy disciples of Christ. But the beautiful things he heard could hardly be for him; he was surely lost. After the meeting the stranger knelt with him, and they prayed together and wept like children. He promised God that he would serve Him; and gave himself to Him body and soul. Peace came to his soul as he was praying in that spirit, and he felt himself pardoned of all his sins. He declared then publicly that from that moment he would begin a new life. He felt God in his heart; he knew that

he was regenerated, and although he did not know where to find shelter for the night, he felt assured that God would always help him. He went to his wife and told her of his conversion. The new light on his face convinced her that a great change had taken place in him, and they began life anew together.

(Communicated by a friend who obtained this story from the person himself.)

I. [Age fifty-four, converted at forty-five.]

My Christian mother died when I was seven. My father was a drinking man, and nominally a Methodist. Up to the age of twelve I had but very little religious or any other kind of education. It was a life of neglect and often hunger and misery. At the age of twelve I was adopted by my godfather, . . . . . and had the blessing of a Christian home. I became a member of the Sunday school of Saint Paul's Church, N. Y. . . . . In course of time I was confirmed and became a member of the church. I was active in all the externals of church life and work, became Sabbath school teacher, member of the Young Men's Association, etc. From 1853 to 1860 I was clerk in my uncle's office. He was a magistrate and had a legal practice.

I got into society at nineteen and was fascinated with dancing, parties, billiards, etc. I commenced smoking at nineteen, and drinking at twenty-one; then followed theatre, gambling, licentiousness and deeper forms of sin. I was leading a dual life, deceiving my uncle and aunt, maintaining an outside semblance of morality, attending church, etc., but living a lie before God. For I had no religion. I had been a respectable and moral church member, but there had been no new birth. . . . . I plunged deeper into drink and dissipation of all forms, until the risk of discovery by my friends in my home became so imminent and I was so utterly reckless that I ran away from home in 1863 to enter the army. I served to the end of the war and came out of it hardened, callous and indifferent. Drink, profanity, cards and sinful amusements of the viler kind occupied my life until 1869. There was no peace. There was a reckless defiance of any religious suggestion, a willful pleasure in sinful enjoyments, resistance to the voice of the Spirit, a mental and physical effort to shut God out of my life. In 1869 I tried to reform and joined the "Church of the Stranger." For about three years I maintained a fairly moral condition by constant struggles and self-efforts. I was regular in the perfunctory duties of church membership, and active in various forms of benevolent work in that church and in the Y. M. C. A., as Sunday school teacher, etc. There was not then, and I knew it, any real inner life, no spiritual joy, no love to the Master: it was a painful forcing to religious duty, and not a spontaneous following of the divine Voice and impulse. The end was a failure. . . . . The house had been swept and garnished and made ready for the seventy devils that took possession.

From 1872 until 1886, with some intermission, I continued the life of slavery to drink and all the grosser sins that go with it. For a short period before and after my marriage in 1878, I reformed from drinking, but there was no religious experience attending it. I did try at intervals to stop drink by self-resolutions, promises, pledges, only to fall back weaker and deeper down than before. . . . . I at last abandoned all efforts and let the tide rush as it would, indifferent to everything human or divine, and often tempted to suicide. How I bless God for saving me! Oh, what love, what wondrous love that saved such a sinner as I was!

When I got utterly hopeless, helpless, in the darkest despair, when I felt the slavery of sin, . . . its physical and spiritual consequences, when I knew and realized that I was utterly and forever lost, so that I dared not even pray, and yet there was just the shadow of a wish, the faintest suggestion of a desire to be free, then God raised up a human instrument. My employer put me in the "Christian Home for Intemperate Men." I went there willingly, gladly; I would have gone anywhere to get away from the hell that was eating away my body and soul. I had not had any special thought of seeking help by the gospel until I went there. I first realized something of hope when I was told that the grace of God alone could save me. I had of course a theoretical knowledge of the plan of salvation, but my heart was dead to any special desire for righteousness for Christ's sake. I wanted to escape from the evil effects of my sins in my physical life, but I do not specially recollect any desire to seek deliverance from all my sinful nature. Conversion had no special meaning to me. I entered the home, hoping that I would escape from drink, recover good health and get back to my family. I spent two weeks in the home, from the 24th of May to the 7th of June, under the quieting influences of religious meetings and bodily and mental rest. . . . I did not make any special effort towards conversion; I could not understand just what faith meant. Yet I enjoyed the prayer meetings, read the Bible, sung the hymns, prayed morning and night; but there was no special sense of relief, or joy or peace. Conscience was blunt in a great measure. In the hour spent with Manager C. A. Bunting, in his study, with the Bible before him, in the afternoon of June 7th, 1886, I realized that I needed a power from outside of myself, a power that could save. He offered me Christ's, and read John iii: 16, "Come unto me all ye that labor, etc.," and other passages. He prayed, and I also. By every conscious effort of my mind and will, I surrendered myself to the power of Jesus, taking Him as my Saviour, trusting His word, and committing myself as fully as it was possible by my volition, to Him. I fully realized that I had no other source of hope for salvation except Him. Yet I believe that the thought was more to escape from the bondage of the appetite for drink than from the whole sinful man. I know that my heart was at rest, and I experienced a feeling of safety and relief when I voluntarily made what I called "a full plunge," and completely surrendered to God's Grace. I think, however, that I thought more about myself and my deliverance than about God or His love. There was no convulsion of feeling, no tears, no bitter agony. It was a simple quiet act of surrender, followed by a consciousness of rest and peace, and a willingness to do and to be just what God would have me. Mr. Bunting questioned me as to my belief, and my answer was that I trusted all God's Word said. He claimed salvation for me and told me that I had received it. I simply believed it. The thing I do know is, that so far as the appetite for liquor, tobacco and other forms of vicious indulgence is concerned, it was taken completely away, and has never returned to this moment, not even a suggestion or longing in the slightest degree. "Old things passed away, and all things became new."

There was a gladness at the sense of release from bondage, and a knowledge of a forgiveness of sin and of salvation. The condition of mind, thought, body and soul may be described in one word—peace. . . . I know also that there came into my heart an intense desire for righteousness. I gradually became conscious of the inward Voice, warning, teaching, guiding, making conscience quick and tender.



One of the first experiences I had was within a year of my acceptance of Jesus as my Saviour. At a meeting I offered myself voluntarily for service to God. Quicker than thought the spirit admonished me that I had wronged a man, and I must confess and right that wrong. I had an awful struggle with myself for a year. Every time I prayed, this thing would come up. I debated with myself and with the Lord and tried to convince myself that I need not do this. I saw no way out of it, nor how to make right the wrong, as I was strapped with debts, and prospects were very gloomy. . . . God at last gave me the grace and courage to overcome my pride and write to this man, one who had greatly helped me in former years. I found a deeper peace and a greater gladness than I ever had before. It confirmed my faith in the reality of God's Word, Christ's work and my own conversion.

Moreover the Lord has abundantly fulfilled His promises in giving me wondrous prosperity and success, and enabling me to restore what I had wronged.

I have learned to look to Jesus as my righteousness and sanctification. He delivers me from self-effort, struggle, unrest and self-condemnation; it is simply a life of growth by constant trust.

K. (Age seventy-three, converted at sixty-four.)

I attended Sunday school irregularly. My heart went out to the pleasures of this world, as far back as I can remember. The deeper I drank of the sinful pleasures the more I loved them. I commenced drinking and smoking at about sixteen years of age. Later, when my appetite got such a strong hold upon me, I endeavored to reform in my own strength, but I always found it a miserable failure, and then, how I would regret that I had fallen into those sinful habits. Then I would sink back into despair, deeper and deeper. I often wished I had never been born.

I got under conviction the first time I saw the Salvation Army on a march. I was playing pool. I went to the door with the rest of the men to see the Salvation Army. God sent an arrow of conviction to my soul, and for the first time I saw it as God sees it; O, how vile and black my heart looked! I thought that I would give the whole world to become as good as those Salvation Army people. I began attending their meetings in the opera house. The oftener I went the more miserable I became; but I could not stay away—there seemed to be some unseen power that forced me to go, and so I went until I could endure it no longer. The night I went to the altar it seemed to me that it was a last chance for me. I went to the altar to give my heart to God, not a part, but every idol, my time, my talents and all. I made a full surrender of everything, and God for Christ's sake set my captive soul free. The chains of hell were snapped, and I was a free man in Christ Jesus. My pen fails me to describe the joy that thrilled my soul as I received the witness of the pardon of my sins. The world and all its charms, which I loved so dearly a few moments before, had vanished, and nothing but perfect love filled my soul to overflowing. I looked at myself in astonishment and wonder; my heart a little while before I gave it to God was full of wicked thoughts,—murder, hatred, deceitfulness and pride,—and now all these things were cast out and nothing but profound love had taken their place; how can a child of God describe these feelings! I can truly say "the love of God passes all understanding." Praise God!

At the time of my conversion my health was not first class. I had lived in dissipation for over forty years.

L. [Age fifty-four, converted at forty-four. Superintendent of a Rescue Mission.]

My parents were not professing Christians. I went to Sunday school only as I took the notion, and that was very little.

When I was nearly eighteen years of age I went into the army. There learned not only to drink, but all the mean and sinful things that follow in its train. When I came out of the service I followed the life of a sailor, and later that of a bar-tender. My life was one continual round of dissipation. I had no desire for anything good, only, at times, there would come a longing in my heart for something better. But it was soon over, and I would if possible go deeper into sin. This continued for about twenty-six years, or until I was forty-four years of age, when one day a lady came into the place where I was selling liquor and asked for the privilege of distributing tracts. I entered into conversation with her and became interested to such an extent that I called on her. The result was that I became sick of the business I was in, and gave it up. But I did not have any desire to become a Christian at that time. I still continued in sin until I felt that I would die if I kept on in the same way. I did not realize that I was a sinner, only that I was a drunkard. And I think my prayer was, "Oh Lord, take away this appetite, I cannot do it myself." It had been a long time since I had had a good night's sleep; but that night I slept well without any stimulant. And I praise the dear Father that I have had no desire to use them since. Ten days later I gave myself wholly to God as far as I knew. But with me it has been a growth in grace. I was very ignorant, knew nothing of God's Word, but He has led me on, and to-day I have an assurance in my heart that I am saved by the blood and kept by the dear Saviour.

I do not know whether I have made myself explicit, but one thing I want to say: I believe that God took away the appetite for drink that night when I asked Him; but I also believe that I was not converted until some days after. I never have had that ecstasy which some profess, but I have always had an assurance that I was saved since I gave myself wholly to Him.

M. [Age thirty-three, converted at twenty-seven. A professional base ball player.]

Parents were not Christians. I received very little Christian education. I was an only child of parents in nice circumstances and received a very good education. I was petted by my parents. At the age of fifteen a religious wave swept over the land. I rose for prayer at a meeting and soon began to lead a different life, but did not continue over one year. At the age of eighteen I left my home and soon began to drink hard. Some years after, I married, but continued to drink and blaspheme, and go to houses of ill-fame as before. I sought for peace and satisfaction in almost every kind of worldly pleasure, but could not find it. I traveled as a professional base ball player, made a great deal of money, spent it, and deprived my wife and two boys God had given me. Soon after my marriage I became an infidel; many of my relatives are such. As I saw myself drifting down, and friends who at one time would have gladly recognized and courted my company shunned me, I sometimes was almost at the point of asking God to forgive me and make me a better man. I often tried to reform in my own strength; but at each attempt I found I had less and less strength. I signed pledges, made promises, and broke them as fast as I made them, until my health was impaired, my intellect affected. I became a wreck,

separated from wife and children. Poverty stared me in the face almost always; sometimes I would sell a chair or a bit of jewelry to keep the wolf from the door. For some time I was in the drink business with my father. On an average I drank forty drinks of whiskey a day, and I cannot tell how much beer, but it would not make me drunk. I left that business and came to Passaic, where my wife and children joined me. There I went in "good drinking society"—business and sporting men. My wife by this time had learned to take a glass, and my little children loved it. I sent them daily to the saloon to buy it. I grew more and more morose and gloomy at home; curses and kicks for the little ones were a daily occurrence. Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the first week of October, 1888, I drank very hard and was very cross to my wife and children, but on the Sunday evening as I came home, I felt rather sorry I had been so bad, and told my wife: "If you would like to go home to Trenton on a visit, you can go." She went on the following Monday morning. I slept at home. I had drunk nothing that morning. At night I thought I would not go out, and so remained in my house without drinking. Neither did I drink on Tuesday nor Wednesday. I spent the evening at home. My mind was quiet, and my health at the time very fair, having been without drink for three days and nights. Wednesday I went to bed early; I felt rather lonely on account of the absence of my wife and children. The house was very quiet. I had not been in bed twenty minutes before I became perfectly conscious of God on my right hand; and all at once I felt the bed dropping, or it seemed so to me; it was just the sensation a person experiences on going down stairs. It seemed as if each step took me farther and farther away from God, and nearer to hell. God spoke to me. (You must remember that I was at this time in open infidelity; I had not been in church for ten years, and, for years, I had not had any Bible in the house. I could not quote a verse of the Bible, except, perhaps, "Jesus wept.") This night God spoke so distinctly that it seemed I heard His voice. He said to me, "Thus far shalt thou go and no further. You have despised Me and My Son. You have gone into the ways of sin and death. Now you are guilty and condemned." And as I lay on my back on the bed, it seemed as if every sin I had committed came before me. God spoke again as at first and added: "If you will turn to Me now, I will forgive you." I had not prayed since I was a boy, except to say sometimes, "God help me." I did not know what conversion meant, and never intended or expected to be a Christian. God said, "Get out of your bed, kneel down and pray to Me"; but just at that moment it seemed as if the devil was present; I felt I could touch him. He said, "Don't you do it, you don't believe in God or His Son. Religion is only fit for a lot of weak-minded women and children, but not for a man like you; besides think of what every one will say." But God spoke again and said, "Now is the time; if you will come to Me, I will forgive and save you from going to hell." All the time the bed seemed to be on its way down to the pit. I thought, "Well, now it is just below;" I seemed almost to hear the devils shrieking; the very breath of the pit seemed to be around me, but my mind was perfectly clear. God said, "Get out of bed, kneel down and pray." I did not know how to pray, but wanted to. And the devil spoke so clearly that it seemed I could hear him a long way off: "Well, if you want to do right, go ahead, that is all right, but do it in a manly way; give up drinking and swearing, but don't ask God to help and save you; you are so bad, He will not help you." O, what a liar he is! But the good loving Father seemed to continue to wait at my bedside;

and, I don't know at what time of night, I finally got out of bed and fell on my knees, feeling that God was angry with me. I just said, "O God, won't you have mercy on me?" Then I got up and went to bed, and fell asleep. When I woke up the next morning I had forgotten all that had happened during the night. As I was crossing the street to go and get my breakfast, a voice said to me, "Don't you remember what happened last night? You had better ask Me to help you out to-day." So I said, "Lord, please keep me from drinking and swearing to-day, will You?" and I went to my work.

As I got out of bed the night before and knelt down, a vision came to me: a number of stairs looking somewhat like a pyramid, and between each stair there was a passage of Scripture, such as "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," and many others, until it seemed as if the stairs, with Bible promises, reached from earth to heaven, and at the top I saw the blessed place, and God Himself sitting there. O, how miserable I felt. This vision continued with me until the following Monday night; during that time, day and night, I saw myself a poor, wretched, hell-deserving sinner; for I had defied the loving God to His face. It seemed as if every sin I had ever committed was constantly before me. That Monday night, as I was on my knees, all alone in the house, there seemed to flash instantly a light surpassing the light of the brightest sun. I was conscious of the presence of Him whom I had insulted, rejected and crucified. My whole being seemed to melt, and I heard Him speak words that at that time I did not know were in the Bible. He said, "Son, thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee." It seemed as if I saw Him; I felt the joys of the ransomed in the beautiful City of God. It seemed as if Jesus Himself had come into my body and took full possession of me. I did not know, though, that I was saved, as we call it now; but I knew God had had mercy on me. I felt, and knew, I was a different man. It seemed as if the birds sang sweeter, the sky looked bluer. Everything about me praised God, and a sweet sense of His presence was with me. I had such a horror of the old life that it seemed I must obey God in everything. . . . I have never gone back to old ways and habits; I have been kept by the power of God alone. To Him be all the glory.

[ He began then to warn his associates, and to speak to them of the love of Jesus. ]

Some ten or twelve months after, my wife, a Roman Catholic, was converted, and our home changed from hell to heaven.

In our work here we have some cases of drunkards converted without the influence of the Christian religion, directly awakened by the Spirit of God.

O. [Age forty-four, converted in 1883. A business man.]

Born of Christian parents belonging to the Lutheran church. At the age of sixteen he passed through a "religious experience." At about eighteen became a commercial traveler and fell away from his former good conduct. He began to drink, and from time to time would get drunk. Many times he made pledges to abstain from alcoholic beverages, but broke them after a few days or, at most, two weeks of abstinence. For fourteen years he went on that way, though never falling to the rank of the habitual drunkard. He was not happy; his conscience reproached him with the slavery under which he had sunk. Often he formed resolutions to overcome this humiliating and degrading habit, and every time passion had the best of his determination.

One Sunday, in Louisville, having company, he remained until 1 A. M., drinking and singing. When left alone he lay on his bed full of shame at the thought that he had once more degraded himself. During the evening they had sung some hymns; now they came back with a crowd of memories of home. He was deeply stirred and promised God that he would never touch another glass of liquor. What distinguished this crisis from the former was the profound conviction of his powerlessness. Until then he had never lost confidence in his ability to overcome his passion; this time he felt that he "could not break it off." He had no thought of Christ, or of any Christian doctrine. He felt utterly defeated and threw himself on the mercy of God for deliverance, ready to do whatever He should command.

On Monday he had no desire to drink, and since that night no liquor has ever entered his mouth. Since that day he has not had to surmount strong temptations.

The following year he joined a temperance association, and later became president of a large "reform club."

[Written from detailed notes taken while the person was giving me an account of his conversion. I have kept his own expressions as far as possible.]

P. [Converted at seventeen. A New York merchant.]

He was from his youth surrounded by Christian influences and maintained a pure life.

"When I was seventeen [in 1886] the evangelist, D. L. Moody, was holding a series of meetings in Brooklyn. A friend of mine, member of the Y. M. C. A., told me of the work he was doing in connection with these meetings [visiting, distributing cards, and the like]. I became interested and wanted to go and see. During the week preceding the meeting in which I was converted, I had premonition that a great change was coming. I had a very clear and vivid idea of sin. Many times I tossed in bed and kept awake, afraid of the judgment. I knew I would be lost. The strongest influence that drove me to give myself to God was the thought of the *judgment itself*, not the fear of punishment. I felt that I had no answer ready; my mind did not go further. For about a year before conversion I had been disturbed in mind and desired to be converted. During the week I speak of, I felt hopeful, while before I thought there was no hope of my being converted. I could not account for that hope. I began to feel more at peace. I think that this was due to somebody who, as I learned afterwards, was at the time praying for me. At the meeting the text was, 'Is the young man Absalom safe?' It seemed to fit my case. It became clear to me during the meeting that all hope was gone; the thought uppermost in my mind then was that I could never get salvation.'" [See continuation, pp. 334 and 335.]

"Since that day I never let a night pass without squaring accounts with the Lord."

[Taken down as near as possible as verbally given me by the person himself.]

Q. [S. H. Hadley, superintendent of the old Jerry McAuley Water Street Mission, New York.]

" . . . . . I gave up my studies, took a traveling position, became a professional gambler, and for fifteen years rarely went to bed sober." He finally lost his position. "One Tuesday evening, on the 18th of April, 1882, I sat in a saloon in Harlem, a homeless, friendless, dying drunkard. I had pawned or sold every-

thing that would bring a drink. . . . I had not eaten for days, and for four nights preceding I had suffered with delirium tremens. As I sat there thinking, I seemed to feel some great and mighty presence. I did not know then what it was. I did learn afterwards that it was Jesus, the sinner's Friend. I walked up to the bar and pounded it with my fist until I made the glasses rattle. I said I would never take another drink if I died in the street. . . . Something said, 'If you want to keep that promise go and have yourself locked up.' I went to the nearest station house and had myself locked up." In his cell he felt the impulse to pray and prayed. The following day he went to the home of his brother, and in the evening attended a meeting at the Jerry McAuley Mission. [For the conclusion see pp. 331 and 332.]

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The conversion of President Jonathan Edwards, of the Rev. John H. Livingston and of Mrs. Eleanor Emerson have been published by the American Tract Society.

For John B. Gough's case, see his "Autobiography."

For Colonel James Gardiner's conversion, see his "Biography" by P. Doddridge, D. D.

For that of the Rev. Mr. Jeremiah Hallock and of the Rev. Mr. A. Nettleton, D. D., see their respective Memoirs.

For that of the Rev. J. O. Peck (case D.), see quarter centennial sermon, delivered by him in Brooklyn, October 21st, 1833.